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founded in 1899, the Presbyterian Historical Society of  
England, founded in 1913, and the Churches of Christ  
Historical Society, founded in 1979)

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## EDITORIAL

John H. Taylor edited the Congregational Historical Society's *Transactions* and the United Reformed Church History Society's *Journal*. He began his editorship in association with R. Buick Knox of Westminster College, Cambridge. He chaired our Society's Council and became the Society's president, and for over fifty years he contributed steadily first to *Transactions* and then to the *Journal*. His service to the Society culminated in *Who They Were in the Reformed Churches of England and Wales, 1901-2000* (2007), which was his idea and for which he was both editor and chief among contributors. Ronald Bocking, who was his fellow student at New College, celebrates John Taylor's life and ministry and enlarges our appreciation of one to whom the Society owes much.

John Taylor's interests embraced the aspects of our history covered in this issue by David Viles, Michael Rutz and Kirsteen Kim. As so often proves to be the case, none is quite as it might seem. Joyce and Robert Wilde were not Puritan stereotypes (who was?); the evolution of a Congregational mission-consciousness owed much to, and was much embarrassed by, William Alers Hankey in the 1830s; and, as David Thompson suggested in our last issue, and Kirsteen Kim suggests in this, Edinburgh 1910 is as ripe for judicious reassessment as most "turning points" in history.

We welcome as contributors Mr Viles who is a United Reformed Church minister living in St Ives (now Cambridgeshire), Professor Rutz who is Associate Professor of History at the University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh, and Dr Kim who is Associate Principal Lecturer at Leeds Trinity University College; her paper was delivered as the Society's Annual lecture for 2010.

## JOHN HORACE TAYLOR

### 21.11.1921 – 27.01.2011

On the morning of 26th January 2011 the postman delivered to the home of John and Betty Taylor in Minehead, their copy of *The Link*, the annual publication of the New College Old Students' Association. It contained a photograph of "The leaving year of 1949" with John Taylor as Senior Student, at the centre of the front, sitting, row (I stood behind him in the second row). They looked at it together and then John went to the meeting of Probus to which he belonged. Shortly after leaving it, he collapsed in the street and was rushed to Taunton Hospital by the Air Ambulance. He never recovered consciousness and died in the small hours of the night. He was eighty nine.

So ended the earthly life of one whom Clyde Binfield described as an "all round minister", a "multi-tasker with an enviable facility for joined-up thinking", who will be remembered in many ways: preacher, pastor, artist, gardener, administrator, historian and editor. Above all he was a Minister of the Gospel. And he was one of those people who do not seek the limelight, but who get things done.

John grew up in Southampton. He and his parents belonged to Bitterne Park Congregational Church near their home but in fact he came from a long line of Protestant Dissenters and had been baptised in Above Bar Congregational Church (destroyed during the Second World War), which Isaac Watts had attended as a boy. So Congregationalism and an awareness of its history was in his bones.

His calling to the ministry came early for he was enrolled as a student at New College London just before his nineteenth birthday in 1940. By 1941 however, his course was interrupted, not to be resumed until the latter part of 1945. (The 1945-6 session began with five students and ended with twenty five, as men were released from the forces. I was the last as it took me over six weeks travel to get home). Applying himself with his usual commitment, John gained the B.D. (London) degree and was Senior Student for his final year. In his Principal's Report at the end of that Session (1948-9), Dr Sydney Cave wrote:

The College has been full and its life happy and harmonious. We owe much to the Senior Student, Mr John Taylor B.D. It is typical of the times in which we live that he entered College nine years ago, but four of these years he spent in the RAF, serving in West Africa.

John Taylor's first church was at Seven Kings, Ilford (my home church). It was there that he met his wife Betty White (the Guide Captain), and I married them there on 12 February 1955. He rejoiced in his wife and their home and their daughter Elizabeth and her family.

After eleven years at Seven Kings, the Taylors moved to Isleworth where

John took charge of the "South West Middlesex Group", working with a lay pastor in each of the three churches: Brentford, Gunnersbury and Isleworth. Then, in 1967, they moved to Beckenham where he served until retiring in 1987, though for the last ten years the charge was officially half time, the other half being as Synod Clerk to the Southern Synod (URC). How much difference that made might be queried as he seems to have preached at Beckenham nearly every Sunday. So all of John Taylor's ministry was in the London area, which meant, among other things, that he could easily get to Dr Williams's Library. Then came retirement to Minehead where for over twenty years John exercised a welcome ministry in many Somerset churches.

Those who remember John's ministry at Seven Kings would then have been young people in the church and their fellowship was known as the "Normeade Club" (established by his predecessor Ralph Essex, the present writer's brother-in-law, it was so named because the church stood at the junction of Meads Lane and Norfolk Road). A few years ago, there was a reunion at Seven Kings of many who had been there in his day and John came up from Minehead for the occasion. Their affection for him was obvious and no less noticeable was the number who had taken responsible positions in the churches to which they now belonged. This was no less true of Betty Taylor's Guides: one of them was now a Presbytery Clerk in Shetland.

Those who remember him as adults were in the Church at Beckenham. The consensus was that in his preaching he was a teacher who made people think, and be open to new ideas; equally he gave time to any who wanted to discuss further. And the theory led to practice for he could relate to people and make innovations that carried them with him. Some discovered what earlier friends had long known: John was a great walker, who thought nothing of a twenty-five mile hike! He instituted a Saturday walking club, but one member soon came to realise that if he walked for a longer time with someone, that person was most likely being asked to do a particular job in the church or the community. But whatever was said of John, it was in fact always "John and Betty." Those who knew them swiftly realised how much a Church should value the minister's wife when considering the nature and success of a particular ministry.

That love of walking came up more than once. In his student days John, with others, was involved in Cong. Soc. in London University, and walking holidays were part of the life of that fellowship. Derek Strange, a fellow student, recalls their walking holidays in the Lakes and Scotland, and a particularly long walk in the Cairngorms when John pointed out to him, and spoke about, the colours in the evening sky. For John Taylor was not only a keen walker but also an artist with an eye for beauty and order; whether in a well-kept garden with well-chosen and nurtured plants, or in the annual Christmas card which many received from "Betty & John", sometimes a glimpse of a place they had visited on holiday that year. And how good it must have been in the Southern Province between 1977 and 1987 to receive a paper from the Synod Clerk illustrated by cartoon-style drawings!

As Synod Clerk, John proved to be a competent and unobtrusive administrator. He had been at school in Southampton with the then Moderator, Cyril Franks, and it was recognised that they were “a formidable partnership”, but that partnership was an expression of their calling as Ministers of the Gospel. Thus they brought into being the “Fairmile Fellowship”, “the purpose of which was to enable ministers and lay people to engage in retreats, quiet days and prayer.” This exists still, though it is now called the “Southern Synod Retreats Fellowship”. A later two-day retreat was based on the book *Come Wind, Come Weather – Bunyan’s Pilgrim in Today’s World*, which John published in 1987.

With this we come to one of the passions of his life: the history of the Congregational Churches, and ultimately the Reformed Churches in England and Wales. This had been encouraged and inspired by Geoffrey Nuttall, who was one of his lecturers at New College and thereafter a friend for life. And it seems likely that Geoffrey Nuttall opened up opportunities for John to exercise his abilities as historian and administrator.

It is only possible to guess when John Taylor first became a member of the Congregational Historical Society, but at the Annual Meeting of the Society in 1957 he “was appointed as Associate Editor of these *Transactions* with Dr Nuttall”. That meeting’s Report records that

Twenty years had passed since Dr Nuttall had joined the late Dr Albert Peel in editing our *Transactions*, and at the Annual Meeting everyone was sorry to learn that he intended resigning. He felt that a younger member should be spurred into taking it up.

The issue of *Transactions* dated October 1959 records that the editor was now John Taylor. He continued as editor until 1976, although from October 1972 the Congregational and Presbyterian Historical Societies had united to become the United Reformed Church History Society with a *Journal*, jointly edited by John Taylor and R. Buick Knox of Westminster College, Cambridge. John Taylor was the Society’s Chairman from 1977 to 1993 and its President from 1993 to 1998, after which he was duly listed as a Past President and administrative responsibilities fell into other hands. That would not stop the flow of articles from his pen.

Here it is of interest to turn to the Index of the *Transactions* of the Congregational Historical Society Volume XVIII (1956-59) which he compiled jointly with Geoffrey Nuttall; Volumes XIX (1960-64), XX (1965-70) and XXI (1970-72) were his as Editor. Fifteen articles by J.H. Taylor are listed, as well as two in supplements, issued in 1962 and 1964. Here was less an editor judging other peoples’ efforts, than an author who knew how contributors felt. Moreover, here is a clear indication that study in Dissenting History was an on-going interest, discipline and passion.

If Geoffrey Nuttall was instrumental in launching John Taylor as an editor, one suspects that he was similarly instrumental in another aspect of John’s

career, for one of the main places where John Taylor would visit was Dr Williams's Library in Gordon Square, Bloomsbury. Geoffrey Nuttall was a Trustee there for fifty years and in 1967 John joined him as a Trustee, serving for forty years. Again his administrative abilities were recognised. He chaired the Library's Ministry Committee from October 1986, and continued for another year after that committee was reconstituted in 1994 as the Grants & Bursaries Committee. He also served for many years on the Finance & Administration Committee. The Library's present Director, David Wykes, describes John as "a regular and diligent Trustee, even after he moved to Minehead".

John Taylor has been described as "a man of consistently ambitious yet achievable schemes", and it seems clear that those who were members of churches where he was minister, would echo those words. Such schemes reached a climax in 2007 with the publication of his greatest project: a book, which he edited with Clyde Binfield, John bearing the lion's share of the administration and of carrying the book to publication in that year. *Who They Were in the Reformed Churches of England and Wales, 1901-2000*, is an important work of reference for present and future generations. Perhaps the idea began when John was at work in Doctor Williams's Library, updating Charles Surman's cards with biographical details of Congregational Ministers. The editors themselves say that the immediate reason lay in Albert Peel's *The Congregational Two Hundred* (1948), and John proposed a book on similar lines to cover the Twentieth Century, although this volume would have a large number of contributors with particular knowledge of the people whose lives would be outlined in the book. Sixty-three contributors provided information for two hundred short biographies. The pattern for each entry (name, degrees and main reason for inclusion, outline of life, of offices held and of family; summary of career; sources for future reference), were John Taylor's responsibility. By this time John was in his eighties, but as alert as ever, still an "all round minister" in every way – and a good friend to many who no doubt also remember that mannerism, when amused or excited, of chuckling and rubbing his hands together.

One could go on to tell how for some years he wrote obituaries for the *Year Book* of the URC, how he abhorred any preaching that played on people's emotions – the Christian faith is too serious for that – and how he marked the quinquennial anniversary of John Calvin's birth (1509) by reading the entire *Institutes*, but enough has been said of a life well lived.

RONALD BOCKING

In preparing this tribute to John Taylor, I have been greatly indebted to the reminiscences of various friends, some verbally and some in writing. To all I wish to express my gratitude. They include particularly: Mrs Betty Taylor, Mrs Dorothy Nutley, Professor Clyde Binfield, Dr David Wykes and the Revds David Helyar, Keith Forecast and Derek Strange.

## AN EJECTED COUPLE : JOYCE AND ROBERT WILDE

In 2003 I wrote a biography of Robert Wilde, which told of his life in the tumultuous years of the English Civil War and the Restoration. He was a parish minister with Presbyterian convictions, who was unwilling to assent to the Act of Uniformity of 1662, and was ejected from his parish. The story is incomplete without reference to his wife and that is the reason for this article.

The popularity of Family History has meant that in recent years parish registers have been transcribed, placed on microfiche, indexed, and much family tree information can be found on the internet. The texts of many rare books can also be found. Local Record Offices have produced useful catalogues of documents which have been lodged with them for safe keeping. Private individuals have posted detailed data bases of their family trees on-line. This development has greatly assisted research into the life of Mrs. Wilde.

Robert Wilde had been ordained deacon in 1630 and in 1639 was ordained priest by John Towers, Bishop of Peterborough.<sup>1</sup> He became curate of Aynho, Northampton, and when his rector, James Longman, a royalist, was ejected from his parish, Robert Wilde was appointed in his place by the Parliamentary Board of Triers in 1646. This was a well-paid living. He stayed in post until 1660, when Longman was allowed to return. Wilde needed to find another parish and was appointed as rector of Tatenhill, another rich living, with a good deal of help from the King.<sup>2</sup> Wilde was in fact a very loyal royalist. Yet in 1662 he was ejected from Tatenhill. He became a well-known Nonconformist and was famous for his best-selling, humorous, satirical poems and his witty sermons.

A reference to Mrs. Wilde appears in the parish register of Aynho in the entry of the baptism of her son, James. This was recorded in Latin on 25 August 1749: "James Wilde, filius Roberti & Jocosam uxorem eius." Making allowance for the strange accusative case, this gives his wife's Christian name: Jocosa, or Joyce in English.<sup>3</sup> That name is later confirmed in Robert Wilde's will. But what was her maiden name and where were they married? When the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* was published in 2004, with an article about Robert Wilde by Richard L. Greaves, this did not give any further details about their marriage.

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1. For details of Wilde's life, poems and Bible Dicing Charity, See David R. Viles, *The Rev. Dr. Robert Wilde, 1615-1659*, (Hemingford Grey: Westmeare Publications, 2003). Richard Greaves "Robert Wild 1615-1659", *ODNB*, (2004), with revised online articles 2007, 2008 at [www.oxforddnb.com/](http://www.oxforddnb.com/).
  2. For fuller information about Wilde's time in Tatenhill see David R. Viles, "The Revd Dr Robert Wilde at Tatenhill" *Staffordshire Studies*, University of Keele, Vol.17, (2006), 77-82.
  3. Parish Register, Aynho. ref.21p/103 (1562-1654), Northamptonshire County Council Record Office.

The elaborate website of Paul Noyes traces the story of the influential family of Noyes in Hampshire and elsewhere in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This states that Joyce Noyes was married to the Revd. Robert Wilde, D.D., the famous Puritan divine, humorist, and poet at Andover, Hampshire. No date is given. The information comes from an article in the *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, July 1998; it gave no source.<sup>4</sup> The Hampshire Archives and Local Studies at Winchester stated that no marriage entry could be found. The register had “suffered considerable damage” before it was conserved and “many page sections and many entries are illegible”.<sup>5</sup>

A search of the Hampshire Archives on-line catalogue gave a reference to Estate Papers, which listed a “Receipt by Robert Wilde, D. D. of Watford, Hertfordshire and Richard Noyes of Ledbury, Herefordshire, gent, for £755 from Joseph Hinxman of Andover in July 1665.” The delivery of this quite large sum of money was witnessed by two independent signatures. The Estate Receipt takes us back to the Noyes family; the link is even more secure since a Samuel Noyes had married a Jane Hinxman of Andover on 25 February 1638. This signature provides a rare instance of Robert Wilde’s handwriting. The manuscript originals of his poems, for example, do not seem to have survived.<sup>6</sup>

An examination of the fiche for the Andover Register confirmed that the original is indeed dilapidated and that several pages are badly stained. There was no reference to the marriage of Robert and Joyce but in the Register of Baptisms section can be found: “Robert, Son of Mr Robert Wilde on 30th May 1643”. In view of this entry there was a further search for the marriage before 1643 both in the fiche and the original register but with no success.

There is, however, an entry in the International Genealogical Index (IGI) which shows the marriage of a Robert Wilde to a Joyce Noyes in 1628 at Andover. Is this an error and did the register at Andover, when it was more legible, actually say 1638? If this is our Robert Wilde, he would only have been thirteen years old in 1628. Foster and Venn both give the age of Wilde’s son, Robert Wilde (Junior) as sixteen in 1661. The evidence in the Andover Register would suggest that Robert (Junior) had in fact gone to Brasenose College, Oxford, aged eighteen.<sup>7</sup> There is no absolute proof that the Revd. Dr. Robert

4. Noyes.roots web.com; Paul C. Reed and Dean Crawford Smith. “The English Ancestry of Peter Noyes”, *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, Vol.152, July 1998, 278-283. (Boston: NE Historic Genealogical Society, 1998), hereafter NEHGR.

5. Correspondence from Ann Walker, Archives and Local Studies, Hampshire Record Office, Recreation and Heritage, Winchester.

6. Hinxman Collection of Andover and North Hinton. Estate Administration. 40M73/E/83, “Receipt by Robert Wilde .....18 July 1665”, Hampshire Record Office, Recreation and Heritage. The manuscript version of “A poem upon the Imprisonment of Mr Calumy” in the British Library, Add. Mss 28758 f.103 is a copy in George Sacheverell’s hand, not an autograph of Wilde’s poem.

7. Parish Register, Andover, 50M67/PR3, 30 May 1643, Hampshire Record Office. Joseph Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses*. 1500-1714, Vol IV, (Oxford: 1892). J. and J. A. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, Part I, (Cambridge: 1927).



Wilde married Joyce Noyes at Andover sometime between the years 1638 and 1642, but the cumulative evidence makes this very likely to be true. It is clear that sometimes Cambridge graduates married the sisters of their college friends. However, a search of student lists has not revealed an old boy network linking Cambridge and Andover. In the original *Dictionary of National Biography* C. Fell Smith suggested, using the evidence of an early poem, that Robert Wilde worked as a school usher after leaving St. John's College, Cambridge and before his ordination. It is possible that the school may have been situated in the Andover area. There are references to a Wilde family in the seventeenth century and later registers of Andover, and perhaps some kind of family link explains how Robert met Joyce. Wilde was born and brought up in St. Ives, Huntingdonshire, son of the local shoemaker, and it is not easy to see how, apart from one or other of these connections, he could have met his future wife.

And so we can build up some kind of picture of the life of Joyce Wilde, *née* Noyes. She was baptized at Andover on 27 November 1609. She was included in a bond (June, July 1645) with Peter Noyes and other members of her family in a family court case brought against Peter Noyes (Senior) by his daughter-in-law, Eleanor *née* Kirby, because it was alleged that Peter Noyes had failed to live up to his promise made to her father on her marriage to Peter Noyes (Junior) in relation to her dowry. The case is summarized in the New England Ancestry article. Joyce would have been Mrs Wilde by this date but it looks as if, as in the case of Eleanor (*née* Kirby) Noyes, she is referred to by her maiden name to make clear the family links.<sup>8</sup>

She married the curate of Aynho between 1638 and 1642. Did she, like her sister-in-law, bring a dowry? Her first son, Robert, was baptized on 30 May 1643. She became the "Rector's wife", when Robert was appointed by the Triers at Aynho in 1646. They had two more children, John born *c.* 1647 and James baptized at Aynho on 25 August 1649, seven months after the execution of King Charles I.

These were not easy times for Joyce Wilde. John Cartwright, High Sheriff of Oxfordshire, was a zealous parliamentarian and patron of the living at Aynho and when the royalist soldiers left his seat at Aynhoe Park, where they had been grudgingly billeted, they retreated, leaving the house in flames.<sup>9</sup> During the upheavals of the fighting around Oxford Robert Wilde was thrown into Oxford prison. We do not know the details, since the records of the prison in the Civil War have not survived. Wilde referred to the experience in vivid detail in the Assize Sermon which he preached before the Judges on 5 March, 1656, at

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8. "NEHGR" *op. cit.*, 281, note 99; PRO Chancery Proceedings, Series 1 C2/ Chas I/N2/68, 26 June /3 July 1645.

9. Alfred Beesley, *History of Banbury*, (1842). George Baker, *History and Antiquities of the County of Northamptonshire*, Vol.1, (1822-30), 549. The old manor house burned down in 1645.

St. Mary's Church, Oxford. It does not need much imagination to see how disturbing these events must have been for Joyce in the rectory.

Then came the Restoration of Charles II to the throne in 1660. Robert Wilde gave a warm welcome to the King in his famous poem, "Iter Boreale". But these events had unexpected consequences for Robert and Joyce. They had to leave the familiar surroundings of Aynho and begin again in Tatenhill. Here they found a two-year period of peace and happiness. They were bringing up their three sons. Two of them, Robert and John, were to go on to University and ordination as Church of England clergymen. James was later set up in business, with a generous gift of £500 from his father, as a linen draper in London after the Great Plague and the Great Fire. But on Black Bartholomew, 24 August 1662, the Wilde family had been ejected from their rectory and parish. The "Receipt" already mentioned suggests that by July 1665 the Wilde family were living at Watford in Hertfordshire. The indexes of A.G. Matthews's *Calamy Revised* show that this was a town where a group of other ejected ministers was living. The various restrictions imposed by the Clarendon Code find Wilde's name being mentioned several times in the Calendar of State Papers Domestic. He and Joyce then moved to a new home at Nuneaton in Warwickshire. This was also a town where a number of ejected ministers had taken up residence. Robert Wilde allowed a group of people to worship at his house. Eventually, in 1669, he was taken to court for allowing conventicles to meet in his house.

We next hear that Robert and Joyce Wilde are living in Oundle, in Northamptonshire. During the brief period of religious tolerance provided by the Indulgence of 1672, Robert Wilde applied for a licence to preach in his own house. Here again was a cluster of ejected clergy. One of them was the vicar of Oundle's brother, William Dillingham, the former Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and ejected from that post in 1662. He and Wilde would meet at Dillingham's house to read poetry. In one Latin poem Dillingham refers to Wilde as "Ferus".<sup>10</sup> The leaders of Nonconformity clearly had links with one another. For instance, one of the overseers of Wilde's will was Martin Orlebar of Colebrook, gent. He appeared in the Calendar of State Papers as applying for a licence for a conventicle in his house at Colebrook, Bedfordshire, in 1672.

When this Indulgence, allowing Nonconformists to worship, if they applied for a licence, was promulgated in 1672, Wilde wrote in appreciation of the influence of Charles II in getting this law passed. "A letter from Dr. Robert Wilde to Mr. J. J. upon his Majesties Declaration for Liberty of Conscience", published in 1672, included a little vignette of domestic life at Oundle. It

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10. William Dillingham, "Campanae Undellenses" in *Poemata varii argumenti, partim e Georgio Herberto (utconque) reditta, partim conscripta, a Wilh. Dillingham...Adscitis etiam aliis aliorum ..Londini, prostant apud R.Royston, 1678*. ["The Bells of Oundle"] Unfortunately there does not appear to be any translation of this poem.

depicts Robert keeping an eye on some frying fish and Joyce laying the tablecloth. A letter had arrived which disturbed their preparations for lunch. Wilde described the scene in his whimsical fashion:

It was Midlent Monday, and the hour of the day when Mortals Maws yaun for Morsels, and everybody gives over all business besides, to attend that ancient good Orthodox Exercise of Eating and Drinking. And my grave hungry self, whilst my Maid was gone for Mustard and my wife was laying the cloth. . . . sat with the frying pan on my knee, admiring the hissing Musick of four salt Herrings.

Robert Wilde received many academic honours. He gained a B.A. and an M.A. from his time in Cambridge, was given a B.D., from Oxford in 1642 on the recommendation of King Charles I and later a D.D. (or S.T.P.: Sanctae Theologiae Professor) from Cambridge on the recommendation of King Charles II in 1661. In spite of the statements of several authorities he was not awarded an Oxford D.D.<sup>11</sup> His volumes of poems went through many editions. John Dryden witnessed to his popularity: "They have bought more editions of his works than would serve to lay under all the pies at the Lord Mayor's Christmas."<sup>12</sup>

The will, already referred to, shows that Wilde appointed his wife Joyce as administratrix of his estate. He calls her "my dear and loving wife" and it feels like a genuine sentiment, rather than a legal convention. She, along with the overseers, would be responsible for carrying out the provisions of the main will and also for arranging the details of the Bible Dicing Charity, which he set up in the second paper associated with the main will. This charity still functions every Whit Tuesday at his native town of St. Ives in Huntingdonshire. Joyce was left the residue of the estate, Robert's "best Bible", and six English books of her own choosing. The rest of the library was divided between his two clergyman sons.<sup>13</sup>

One of Wilde's printed prose essays, (which concludes with verses), tells in a light hearted fashion of the way "In my study (my books and myself musty

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11. The specific date given by some for this ceremony at Oxford is in fact the date of the letter sent by Charles II to the Vice Chancellor and Senate of the University of Cambridge from "our Court of Whitehall on the ninth day of November 1660" to recommend that Robert Wilde should be created Doctor of Divinity. There is no reference to Robert Wilde in the original Registers of Convocation of the University of Oxford in 1660.

12. John Dryden, *Of Dramatic Poesy*, (1668).

13. R. Wilde. Will. Prob. II 362. Public Record Office. "...all my estate, real or personal, goods, plate, money, household stuffe and whatever I have of temporal substance not hereby disposed of.." The Additional Writing explaining the terms of the Bible Dicing Charity is not with the Record Office Copy. Numerous copies have, however, survived; one is witnessed as a true copy of the will in the St. Ives Vestry Book. St. Ives 3734. 8, Vestry 1 P.C.C. Huntingdonshire Archives.

and melancholy) were all put in the shade" when a new book by the Revd. Edmund Reynolds arrived. Wilde gives us a list of his Early Church Fathers: Origen and his Allegories; Justin Martyr; Tertullian and his Apologia; Augustine and his Confessions; Jerome and his scholarship; and the Venerable Bede, then his few books of the medieval theologians, "my schoolmen, for I have not many", St Thomas Aquinas and his Summa and the more recent theologians, Cleaver, Dod, (he also mentioned them in his "Alas Poor Scholar"), Dr Preston, Thomas Goodwin, John Goodwin and Pierce. "All my books seemed to disappear as the stars at the rising of the sun. You cannot imagine what shame, confusion and envy my poor shelves discovered. Some poor authors stood gaping, other tumbled down and others burst their bindings, my schoolmen stood with their strings untied". Of course it is a fanciful description but it reads like an authentic catalogue of the contents of his study and is an insight into the material he might have used for sermon preparation.

It is only possible to speculate on the six English books, which might have been chosen by Joyce. Apart from the English theological books, there would have been copies of his own poems, the poems of John Cleveland, a member of the teaching body at St. John's when Wilde was an undergraduate, and probably the poems of Thomas Flatman and those of George Wither.<sup>14</sup>

Robert Wilde died in 1679 aged sixty-four. He and Joyce had been married for about forty years. She had been brought up in the important Noyes family at Andover, and had the status of rector's wife for nearly twenty-five years at Aynho and Tatenhill. They were not natural agitators against the *status quo*. There is some evidence that Robert was brave enough to sign "The Humble Advise and Earnest Desires of certain well affected Ministers" addressed to the Council of War, which declared "utter" dissent from the legal proceedings against Charles I.<sup>15</sup> Life had been difficult during the time of the Civil War, then the Commonwealth, and Robert did not continue to publish his royalist views until after Oliver Cromwell's death. The loss of status after 1662 could not have been easy for Joyce. From earliest childhood she had been someone of local social standing. Financially it would appear that at first they were supported by the Noyes family, if that is the conclusion which can be drawn from the Estate Papers Receipt of 1665. We know that Robert received ten crowns from Charles II's doctor, Sir John Barber, since he wrote a thank you poem about it. The livings at Aynho and at Tatenhill were recognised as well-paid appointments and it may be that he had managed to save money from their income. Above all it seems likely that he received a good income from the many editions of his poems, which were very popular. Samuel Pepys used them as part of his entertainment on Christmas Day, 1667. And so the Wildes carved

14. Robert Wilde, *A letter to a Friend* n.d. (pre 1671); John Cleveland, *The Rebel Scot*, (1644), *et cet*; George Wither, *Juvenilia*, (1622), *et cet*; Thomas Flatman, *Poems and Songs*, (1674).

15. Alfred Beesley. *op.cit.* 435-6. Nicholas Cooper, *Aynho. A Northamptonshire Village*. (1894), 93. J.M. Stokes, *Life and Works of Robert Wild*, (1930), B. Litt. Oxford, 6.

out a new life for themselves after the Ejectment. Friendship was found with like-minded Nonconformists in the various towns where they lived. They survived the attention of those authorities, who tried to put the harsh penalties of the Clarendon Code into practice. Robert was clearly able to support his sons in their chosen careers, financially at university and in business. He made loans to Robert and John in their parishes. He did not appear resentful that they did not follow the Presbyterian path which he had pursued. The provisions of his will indicate that he did not die penniless.

His widow continued to live in Oundle. Her sons had left home, pursuing their own careers. She probably had the responsibility of arranging the funeral of her second son, the Revd. John Wilde, at Oundle, who died only three years after the death of his father in September 1682. Joyce Wilde, *née* Noyes, was a widow for eight years and was buried at Oundle aged seventy-eight, and was respectfully described as "Mrs." in the Oundle Parish Burial Register on 24 January 1687.<sup>16</sup>

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16. Oundle Parish Register: Burials, 25 September 1682, John Wild, and 24 January 1686/7, Mrs Wildes. Information from Mrs. Julie Moss, who was transcribing the Register at the time of my enquiry.

## DISSENTERS IN THE COUNTRY: LONDON ORGANIZATIONS AND DISSENTING OPINION IN THE 1830s

In 1936 G.M. Young observed that in the mid-nineteenth century, “Evangelicalism had imposed on society, . . . its code of Sabbath observance, responsibility, and philanthropy; of discipline in the home, of regularity of affairs; it had created a most effective technique of agitation, of personal persuasion and social persecution.”<sup>1</sup> During the first half of the century evangelicals had accomplished this predominance of their attitudes through numerous campaigns focused on the advancement of social, political, and moral reform at home and throughout the wider world. These activities included the temperance and Sabbatarian movements, home and foreign missions, and antislavery campaigns. This activism had also coincided with the greater involvement of evangelical Dissenters in particular in the political life of the nation. The increasingly important organizations associated with this activism – missionary and temperance societies, political organizations, and the like – were mostly based in London. Nevertheless, they relied upon the financial and organizational support of ministers and lay people throughout the country. This paper examines certain aspects of the relationship between these organizations, their London-based leadership, and their supporters throughout the country. Focusing on the issues of antislavery and disestablishment, it argues that the political opinions of ministers and lay organizations throughout the country were crucial in shaping the policies and agendas of the London based organizations. Dissenters in the country were often quicker to take up a more aggressive or controversial stance on these issues, and used their influence to put pressure on the leaders of the national organizations to follow suit.

### I

#### Antislavery and the London Missionary Society

In January 1832 William Alers Hankey, an influential Congregationalist and London banker, resigned as Treasurer of the London Missionary Society. Hankey had served in that office for sixteen years, and was widely recognized as a friend of the missionary movement. However, at the height of the political controversy over the abolition of slavery in the British Empire, Hankey was discovered to have business and financial connections to a slave plantation in Jamaica. News of a prominent missionary leader’s ties to that “accursed system,”<sup>2</sup> set off a dramatic controversy within the LMS. Outrage on the part

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1. G.M. Young, *Victorian England: Portrait of an Age*, (London: 1953, 2nd ed.), 5.
  2. E.A. Wallbridge, *The Demerara Martyr; Memoirs of the Rev. John Smith, Missionary to Demerara*, (London: 1848), 183.

of lay supporters of the society overcame the opposition of the Board of Directors and forced Hankey's resignation.

Opposition to the slave economy, and the slave trade in particular, had emerged in force during the final decades of the eighteenth century. Organization of the initial campaigns against the slave trade relied heavily upon the participation of Quakers and evangelical Anglicans. Within the movement manufacturers, merchants and artisans took a leading role at both the local and national level through such organizations as the London Abolition Committee. James Oldfield has identified them as "practical men who understood about the market and consumer choice," and who sought to "create a constituency for antislavery through books, pamphlets and artifacts." The nascent antislavery movement was closely connected to more extensive social and economic developments taking place during the 1780s and '90s.<sup>3</sup>

Popular Protestantism, nevertheless, provided much of the initiative and support for the growth of antislavery in Britain. By the first decade of the nineteenth century a growing religious public increasingly understood slavery as contrary to the workings of a divine providential order and as interfering in the relationship between man and his creator. In ever larger numbers they saw its existence as an outstanding evil that their religious principles called them to oppose.<sup>4</sup>

While evangelical Dissenters lent considerable support to this movement, their active participation in antislavery activities was slower to materialize than that of the Quakers or evangelical Anglicans. This was especially true of missionary societies, like the LMS, and their agents. For fear of the reprisals of slave owners against their missions these groups only hesitatingly participated in open agitation against slavery. Even following the successful abolition of the slave trade in 1807 the missionary organizations shied away

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3. James Oldfield, *Popular Politics and British Anti-slavery: the Mobilisation of Public Opinion against the Slave Trade, 1787-1807*, (Manchester: 1995), 1-2.

4. For a general overview of the theological impulses for the British antislavery movement see: Roger Anstey, "Slavery and the Protestant Ethic," in Michael Craton, ed., *Roots and Branches, Current Directions in Slave Studies*, (Oxford: 1979), 157-81. Pointing to the failure of the abolitionist movement among evangelicals in the American South, Donald Matthews and others have questioned Anstey's conclusion that these theological trends provided the primary impulses to evangelicals' participation in the antislavery movement. See Matthews, "Religion and Slavery: The Case of the American South," in C. Bolt and S. Drescher, eds., *Anti-Slavery, Religion, and Reform* (Folkestone: 1980), 207-32. Matthews plausibly suggests that it was a combination of evangelical influences with the ideas of artisan radicals that gave the British movement its particular impetus. My own view is that the significance of evangelicals' growing concern for the protection of religious freedom should be added to the mix. Anstey's argument, nonetheless, remains vitally important for emphasizing the role of "anti-slavery as a means of sanctifying, or ... sacralising the cause of social justice" among early-nineteenth century evangelicals. See the comments of David Brion Davis, in Craton, *Roots and Branches*, 179.

from openly embracing the antislavery cause. The societies adopted a standard rule of refraining as much as possible from interfering in colonial politics, especially as related to the "civil condition" of the slaves.<sup>5</sup> The LMS stressed to its missionaries their duty to "point out" to the slaves "the way of salvation" and "the consolation of religion," rather than to "interfere with their servile condition."<sup>6</sup> Such assurances, missionary leaders hoped, would placate the planters and keep them from raising obstacles to the evangelization of the slaves.

A policy of neutrality towards slavery seemed necessary because of the deep mistrust with which the West Indian planters viewed the missions and their potential connections to the antislavery movement in Britain. During the early nineteenth century conservative forces in Britain increasingly saw in the expansion of evangelical Christianity a threat to the social and religious order of the nation. The egalitarian spirit of evangelical Dissent defied the notions of status and patronage still deep-seated within British society, and posed no less of a threat to the social and economic order of the expanding British Empire. Missionaries arrived in the slave colonies of the West Indies bearing not merely the Christian gospel, but also notions of liberty and brotherhood inherent in the ethos of Nonconformist Protestantism. Colonists' fears of religious enthusiasm were thus multiplied by what Emilia Viotti da Costa characterized as the democratic manners and the rhetoric of equality promoted by many of the Nonconformist missionaries.<sup>7</sup> Most planters did not condemn religious instruction *per se*, but they were extremely suspicious of the so called sectarian missionaries and their egalitarian ideas.

Try as the missionary societies might to assure planters of their determination not to meddle in the civil condition of the slaves, colonists' hostility towards the missions increased with every advance of the antislavery movement in Britain. In the first decades of the nineteenth century the planters tried out an array of impediments to the evangelization of the slaves. In 1802 the colonial assembly of Jamaica prohibited preaching by those it called "ill-disposed, illiterate, or ignorant enthusiasts," all code words for evangelical Nonconformist missionaries and their converts among the black population. The Corporation of Kingston ratified similar measures in 1807 against "ignorant persons and false enthusiasts." The ordinance noted the "alarming" growth in the attendance of slaves and free blacks at religious meetings where "unseemly noises, gesticulations, and behaviours ... [took] place," and set fines to punish unauthorized preachers and property owners who made their "house, outhouse, yard, etc." available for unlicensed religious meetings.<sup>8</sup>

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5. Baptist Missionary Society, Letter of Instructions; *A Statement of the Plan, Object and Effects of the Wesleyan Missions to the West Indies*, (London: 1824).
  6. *Demerara. Further Papers, Copy of Documentary Evidence*, (House of Commons: 1824), 27-29.
  7. See, for example, E. Viotti da Costa, *Crowns of Glory, Tears of Blood: the Demerara Slave Rebellion of 1823*, (Oxford: 1994), 9-12.
  8. "An account of the law passed by the Corporation of Kingston," in *The Evangelical Magazine*, October 1807, 471-2.



Comparable legislation to hinder missionary activities came about in Bermuda, Anguilla, St. Vincent, Tobago, and Demerara, the location of the LMS's primary West Indian mission.

From the outset LMS missionaries in Demerara encountered "latent" and sometimes "open" hostility from slave owners and colonial administrators.<sup>9</sup> Success as an evangelist often depended upon the missionary's ability to win the confidence of the slaves, which frequently meant defending them against the abuses of plantation life. While missionary leaders in London sought to avoid suggestions of political agitation and connections to the antislavery movement, missionaries in the field found it increasingly difficult to play the role assigned to them. The circumstances of their task brought home a belief in the incompatibility of slavery and the Christian faith, an attitude more closely aligned with the antislavery movement than with mission policies that continued to stress keeping on good terms with planters.

In 1811 the missionary John Wray protested to London about the antagonism toward his mission by the Demerara planters. This included forced labour on Sunday that prevented slaves from attending church services, and a ban on religious meetings at night. With the aid of the antislavery leader William Wilberforce, the LMS made a direct plea to the British government for relief from the opposition of the colonists and the colonial governor. The directors appealed to "British values" and requested the government to restore the "religious toleration" previously enjoyed by the missions.<sup>10</sup> At about the same time the Dissenting Deputies began to raise concerns over "the violent measures adopted by the Assembly of Jamaica on the highly important subject of religious instruction." In a memorial to the Privy Council they labelled the actions of the Assembly "illegal and unjust," as well as "in opposition to the general principles of a just and liberal Toleration."<sup>11</sup>

Toleration and religious freedom were the cornerstone issues of Dissenting politics in the early nineteenth century. The defence of religious toleration drew evangelical Dissenters into the political life of the nation, and also played a fundamental role in mobilizing their opposition to slavery. The efforts of slave owners and colonial governments to restrict the activities of missionaries and the access of slaves to religious instruction helped to make abolitionists out of the numerous supporters of the missionary movement. When Henry Brougham asked the House of Commons in 1824 whether John Smith, a LMS missionary in Demerara, who died after being imprisoned by the colonial authorities on suspicion of inciting a slave revolt, had suffered an injustice because he was a Dissenter, his intervention signified the important role which

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9. R. Lovett, *The History of the London Missionary Society 1795-1895*, (London: 1899), Vol. II, 320.

10. School of Oriental & African Studies [SOAS], CWM/LMS archives, Minutes of the Board of Directors, 19 August 1811.

11. Guildhall Library, MS 3083, 4, 334-7, Dr. Williams's Library [DWL], Minutes of the Dissenting Deputies, 29 November 1811.

the issue of religious freedom played in shaping the relationship between the missionary movement and the antislavery cause.<sup>12</sup>

Antagonism towards Nonconformist missionaries in the West Indies intensified as slave owners more readily identified them as allies of the antislavery movement and a threat to colonial interests. The colonists' hostility towards the missions contributed directly to the tensions that ignited slave revolts in Demerara in 1824, and in Jamaica in 1831. They, in turn, helped to concentrate British public opinion more strongly in favour of immediate emancipation. The response of the religious public to the planters' declaration of "open war on Evangelical Christianity" stoked the flames of the antislavery movement and made abolition, not parliamentary reform, the primary issue in the popular politics of the early 1830s.<sup>13</sup> Ministers urged members of their congregations to vote only for candidates willing to pledge themselves against slavery. The Baptist Committee, the Dissenting Deputies, and the missionary societies forcefully lobbied the government against colonists' attacks upon the religious and civil rights of the missionaries.

The intensity of the debate compelled the leaders of the prominent missionary societies to take a stronger public stand against slavery, and to engage more directly with the political issue. This process is illustrated in the controversy surrounding the resignation of Hankey as treasurer of the LMS. As a partner in the banking firm of Thompson, Hankey, Plummer and Company, Hankey held a joint interest in a Jamaican slave plantation of which the bank had been mortgagee. According to the Society's Board of Directors, Hankey had "laboured to free [him]self" as much as possible from any voluntary connection to the property.<sup>14</sup> Reluctant to invite controversy, and satisfied with Hankey's stature as a man of character, the Board had seen fit not to make an issue out of the circumstances. However, in the heated atmosphere of the abolitionist agitation of the early 1830s the connection between an officer of a missionary society and a slave plantation was a situation ripe to become a major controversy.

Hankey was not, of course, a typical slave owner. Indeed, his strong interest in the religious instruction of the slaves on the Acadia plantation was partly responsible for instigating the controversy that forced his resignation. Since the LMS did not have missionaries in Jamaica, he met the Baptist missionary William Knibb, and the committee of the Baptist Missionary Society, to discuss the possibility of establishing a mission on the estate. Through this

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12. See Brougham's speech to the House of Commons in *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, vol. 11, 1 June 1824, cols. 961-3.

13. See, R. Anstey, "The Pattern of British Abolitionism," in Bolt and Drescher, *Anti-slavery*, 28; M. Brock, *The Great Reform Act*, (London: 1973), 103-4; and E. Halévy, *Triumph of Reform* (New York: 1961), 4.

14. W.A. Hankey, *A Letter to Thomas Wilson, Esq. Occasioned by the 'Analysis' of his evidence on the subject of Slavery Before the Committee of the House of Commons*, (London: 1833), 5.

contact knowledge of his connection to the plantation spread throughout evangelical circles in London. The information reached the committee of the Anti-Slavery Society, which called upon Hankey to either “immediately” emancipate the slaves on the plantation or to resign as treasurer of the LMS, “an office incompatible with possessing such property.”<sup>15</sup> The Anti-Slavery Society further conveyed the information to auxiliaries of the LMS throughout the country the hope being that they might put pressure on the society’s directors to take action. Numerous auxiliaries wrote to London for clarification, or confirmation, of Hankey’s status as an officer of the Society and also “a proprietor of slaves in the West Indies.” The Newcastle Auxiliary forwarded a resolution to the directors in November 1831 declaring all slave owners “unfit for any official situation in a Christian Institution,” and demanding Hankey’s resignation.<sup>16</sup> The Ebenezer Juvenile Auxiliary Society of Birmingham also wrote to condemn Hankey’s association with the Society. If “the present treasurer continue[d] in office,” they threatened, “we would rather devolve the proceeds of our labours to the funds of some other institution, than give the slightest degree of sanction to the crime of man-stealing.”<sup>17</sup>

The directors, always anxious to side-step controversy, refused to subject their treasurer to “indiscriminate censure” for what they deemed “altogether unavoidable” circumstances.<sup>18</sup> Hankey himself branded his critics as meddling “inquisitors,” and condemned the “degrading invasion of [his] independence, arising out of the spirit of the times.” He further reproached their demands for “a Test of qualification for office,” and warned that such a precedent might deter “the cooperation of . . . persons whose influence and authority may be efficacious in promoting Missionary labour amongst the Negro population.”<sup>19</sup> Hankey was defending a standard policy of the missionary societies throughout the early nineteenth century, the advancement of religious instruction among the slaves by cultivating relationships with sympathetic slaveholders. Many within the society believed this to be among the most fruitful means of preparing the slaves for their eventual emancipation.

This perspective is evident in Hankey’s testimony before a parliamentary committee on emancipation in 1832. He called slavery a “national crime,” and declared himself “at all times ready to cooperate in any proper system to effect emancipation.” Nevertheless, Hankey told the committee that he did not support immediate emancipation as a practical remedy. In his opinion the

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15. *Ibid.*, 3.

16. SOAS, CWM/LMS, Auxiliary Records: 1, Newcastle 1827-1935, Minute Book 1827-44, 14 September and 16 November 1831.

17. SOAS, CWM/LMS, Home Office: 5/7/A, Ebenezer Juvenile Auxiliary Missionary Society to Board of Directors, no date, 1832.

18. SOAS, CWM/LMS, Minutes of the Board of Directors, 23 December 1831.

19. SOAS, CWM/LMS, Home Office: 5/7/A, Hankey to Board of Directors, 24 November 1831, 11 and 13 February 1832.

slaves were not "at present in a state of preparation to make a useful and proper use of the benefit" of freedom. He affirmed his belief that Christianity was the best means to secure the "moral feeling and habits" that would prepare the slaves for emancipation at a later date. To that end, he objected to what he called the "violent" and "injudicious" attacks of the Anti-Slavery Society, which he believed "alienated planters sympathetic to the missions and slowed the spread of religious instruction." He told the committee, "I am a friend of the object of the Anti-Slavery Society, but not the means by which it carries on its object."

Hankey's cautious and pragmatic approach to the question of emancipation reflected more than three decades of mission policy. By the early 1830s, however, the position had become increasingly untenable to a growing number of evangelical Dissenters and missionaries calling for immediate emancipation. This is apparent in the failure of the directors to dispel the controversy by way of explanations or excuses in defence of their treasurer. Hankey recognized this himself early in 1832. "Unwilling to become a subject of discord . . . that I must become, if I continue in my office," he tendered his resignation to the directors.<sup>20</sup>

The broader shift in evangelical Dissenting attitudes towards abolition became evident as even relatively moderate organizations, such as the General Body of Dissenting Ministers, took up the abolitionist cause. In 1833 this body unanimously resolved to petition Parliament in support of abolition. In no uncertain terms the petition affirmed that "for the measure to be safe [it] must provide for the immediate emancipation of the slaves," and "for it to be satisfactory [it] must ensure the complete extinction of the claim of property in the person and labour of the slave."<sup>21</sup> In 1800, a man in Hankey's situation, or any slave proprietor committed to provide for the religious instruction of the slave on his plantation, might have been celebrated for his humanitarian spirit. By the 1830s, in the eyes of a majority of evangelicals, such a man could be nothing more than "a foul stain"<sup>22</sup> upon the integrity and credibility of the missionary society.

The intensification of the planters' hostility to the missions during the early decades of the nineteenth century stoked the flames of evangelical Dissenters' opposition to slavery. Abolition became the primary focus of popular politics in the early 1830s as evangelical ministers urged members of their congregations to vote only for candidates willing to pledge themselves against slavery, the missionary societies lobbied the government to retract any policies that gave the appearance of concessions to the planters on the question of religious toleration. In 1831 the Society's directors objected forcefully to "legislative enactments" intended to "shut out . . . Missionaries" from access to

20. SOAS, CWM/LMS, Minutes of the Board of Directors, 12 January 1832.

21. DWL, Minutes of the General Body of Dissenting Ministers, MSS 38, 105-7, 272-3.

22. SOAS, CWM/LMS, Newcastle Auxiliary, 15 February 1832.

the slave population, and that were opposed to the "acknowledged rights" of British subjects.<sup>23</sup> Religious freedom offered the leaders of the missionary movement a means to express their public opposition to slavery, and by couching their arguments within the rhetoric of toleration they tapped into a long tradition of Dissenting political activism.

The story of William Alers Hankey's resignation reflects the broader shift in popular attitudes brought about by the antislavery movement whereby over the span of half a century a leading nation in the trade and use of slaves became the leading opponent of slavery throughout the world. Moreover, the controversy suggests that the growth of antislavery was closely tied to a popular transformation in Dissenting opinions about slavery. Calls for Hankey's resignation did not come from the directors of the LMS, but rather from members of local and auxiliary organizations outside London. Pressure for missionary organizations to take a more active antislavery stance thus came from below.

The religious public at home, and missionaries themselves, pressed the leaders of the London Missionary Society to assume a stronger position against the institution of slavery. Evangelical Dissenters' interest in the protection of religious freedom in the colonies also provided a significant stimulus to this escalation of the demands for abolition in the years before 1833. In that year, Zachary Macaulay commented on the implications of the "intense interest" of evangelical Dissenters in the abolition movement; "they have not only caught fire themselves but have succeeded in igniting the whole country."<sup>24</sup>

## II

### Disestablishment and the London Political Organizations

Antislavery was not the only issue that animated Dissenters in the early 1830s. In the wake of the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, Dissenters had turned their attention to so-called practical grievances including the exclusion of Dissenters from degrees at Oxford and Cambridge, restrictions on marriage and burials, and the payment of church rates. The leadership of the Dissenting interest organized their campaign along the lines of their successful efforts to achieve repeal in 1828. However, the pragmatic and instrumentalist nature of the London-based campaign was soon to find itself caught up on a rising tide of calls for the disestablishment of the Church of England. In the early part of 1834, Grey's administration took up the question of Dissenting grievances. Lord John Russell's marriage bill, introduced in February, was followed by Althorp's proposal on church rate reform in the early spring. Neither proposal met the expectations of Dissenters, who vigorously opposed

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23. SOAS, CWM/LMS, Home Office: 5/7/B, Copy of the Board of Directors' Memorial to Viscount Goderich.

24. Quoted in Anstey, "The Pattern of British Abolition," 28.

them. As a result, the government withdrew both bills. The fact that these events coincided, more or less, with the rise of Dissenting support for disestablishment, has led many historians to suggest a causal link between the two.

However, a careful examination of the records of key Dissenting political organizations, such as the United Committee for Dissenting Grievances and the General Body of Dissenting Ministers, suggests a different interpretation. In November 1833, as the United Committee for Dissenting Grievances was preparing for the government's legislation on marriages and church rates, the committee received a resolution from a group of forty-eight ministers and laymen in Sussex, suggesting the organization of a public meeting "of Representatives of all the Protestant Dissenting Congregations in the Kingdom" in order to discuss "the points to be brought before Parliament." While the authors claimed that they had no intention of trying to "intimidate," their letter implied a lack of faith in the effectiveness of the London-based committee. They had been motivated to write, it was reported, by a sense that "something more is required to be done, than appears to us to be doing."<sup>25</sup>

Similar dissatisfaction was expressed to the committee by a delegation of ministers – including John Blackburn, editor of the *Congregational Magazine* – from the Congregational Union of England and Wales. They warned that "Dissenters in the Country" had urged them "to take decisive measures, and that . . . if the [United] Committee did not act the Congregational Union must." Moreover, in addition to the traditional issues of marriage and church rates the delegation insisted that the committee "must break ground on the subject of a National Establishment." The ministers asked the committee to issue a public statement putting forth not only "all the Grievances of Dissenters," but also "the Question of a National Establishment as the main point." Making their point more forcefully, they asked: "Will this Committee be prepared to occupy such ground?" If not, they concluded, "there will be no possibility of looking to this Committee."<sup>26</sup>

Neither the Sussex resolution, nor the delegation from Congregational Union moved the committee to immediate action. However, further correspondence shows that the committee remained under pressure. In late November a letter from the "Liverpool Association of Evangelical Dissenters" addressed the subject of the *Regium Donum*, or the parliamentary grant to impoverished Dissenting ministers that had replaced the original royal grant. The authors asserted that the "reception of such a boon from Government by the Dissenters is a direct and obvious violation of the principles which, as Nonconformists, we avow." The issue of the grant was especially important "at the present Crisis," since "those principles are coming into public View with a prominence and a power heretofore unknown."<sup>27</sup> The committee did not immediately take

25. Guildhall Library, Minutes of the United Committee, MSS 3086/1 (1833-35), 84-88.

26. *Ibid.*, 89-91.

27. *Ibid.*, 91, 95-6.

up the issue of the parliamentary grant, but it did pass a resolution to organize a subcommittee to draft a declaration of grievances, including a prominent statement of the great principle "That the union of Church and State however it may be modified is unsupported by Scripture unjust to large classes of the Community and like injurious to the Interests of Civil Government and to the Cause of Religion."<sup>28</sup>

Pressure from the country Dissenters did not let up. On 16 December the minutes record the receipt of a second letter from Sussex, this time written by the Revd. J.N. Gouly. He informed them that "a very respectable meeting of Dissenters," held at his chapel, had just formed a standing committee in order to spread information about Dissenting grievances and to write to the government on the subject. The letter expressed a general dissatisfaction with the United Committee's actions to date. "Indeed something must be done," Gouly wrote. "Our friends are very anxious for a meeting to be convened in London," and "there wants a Standing Committee to be appointed . . . if the Deputies [sic] will not . . . take the lead." Finally, Gouly complained about a piece in that day's *Patriot*, calling for an exchange of pulpits between Anglican and Dissenting ministers. "What trifling is this at this great Moment," he implored. "The Country is beginning to warm at all points," and added that "our letter to you and our proceedings to day will be in the Paper next Week."<sup>29</sup>

In the discussion of responses to these continued protestations, divisions within the committee itself began to show. Also on 16 December, unidentified members opposed the approval of the minutes from the previous meeting without clarification that approval only confirmed "what took place" at the meeting, and not "approval or disapproval" of the committee's actions – i.e. the resolution to make a declaration on the issue of Church and State. Then, on 23 December, the Unitarian ministers, Thomas Aspland and Thomas Rees, proposed to instruct the subcommittee charged with writing the United Committee's appeal to the government to make "a positive, but plain and simple assertion of the principle of the Mass of Protestant Dissenters and an explicit Statement of the practical Grievances under which Protestant Dissenters still labour." More significantly, they argued that it was:

Particularly desirable to avoid all Averments and Recommendation which would be interpreted by the public into a Declaration of war against the Church of England and an exposition of a deliberate and concerted plan for the Overthrow of the Church by the Protestant Dissenters.<sup>30</sup>

After a lengthy debate, Aspland's and Rees's proposal was defeated by a vote of fifteen to nine, and the following week a second proposal to direct the subcommittee to focus its draft on "the redress of Grievances" rather than

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28. *Ibid.*, 101-2.

29. *Ibid.*, 106-7.

30. *Ibid.*, 108-9.

issues of Church and State also failed.<sup>31</sup> In the coming months the efforts of Unitarian ministers, such as Aspland and Rees, to moderate the disestablishment rhetoric of the committee were to be routinely defeated by orthodox members (especially Congregationalists) spurred on by the more aggressive opinions of country Dissenters.

J.B. Brown and Thomas Wilson then moved a response to the Liverpool Association, expressing agreement with their position on the parliamentary grant. They held that Dissenting ministers “cannot in their Character as Preachers of the Gospel accept of [sic] an allowance or Gratuity from the public Revenue without violating one of the fundamental principles of Nonconformity in the entire Independence of the Church for its support from the State.” That statement raised particular problems for the Unitarians, Aspland and Rees, who were both members of the committee of Presbyterians that supervised distribution of the grant. Rees thus responded by offering a terse and aggressively worded amendment. He proposed that the committee, “beg leave to state that the Grant to Dissenters from the Civil List formerly known by that Designation [i.e. *Regium Donum*] has ceased for more than 20 Years.” In response to the main point, Rees proposed to say that:

the corresponding Grant annually voted by the Parliament for the Relief of poor Dissenting Ministers, together with the annual Parliamentary Grant to the Presbyterian Ministers of Ireland will receive the deliberate consideration of this committee . . . whenever they shall deem the time to be arrived for preferring a direct application to the Legislature for the discontinuance of all payments from the National Funds towards the Support of Religion.<sup>32</sup>

Rees’s resolution reflected an increasingly outdated view of Dissenting politics, which saw disestablishment and practical grievances as two separate questions, and to which the intense opposition aroused by the parliamentary grant was incomprehensible. The committee resolved to postpone further consideration of the question until the end of January, but the outcome was hardly in doubt.

Shortly before Parliament reconvened, on 14 January, the subcommittee presented its *Brief Statement of the Case of Protestant Dissenters* amidst the expectation of new relief legislation from the government. The *Statement* opened in an optimistic and decidedly Whiggish tone. “Religious Liberty has been brought to its present favourable state by the slow, but certain advancement of Society in knowledge, truth and justice.” Nonconformity, it continued, “had its origin in the principles maintained and acted upon at the Reformation.” That was not particularly controversial, but the authors then

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31. *Ibid.*, 119-20.

32. *Ibid.*, 121-2.



used the reference to the birth of Protestantism to forge a link between Reformation principles and political values, going beyond the sort of rhetoric taken by the United Committee for Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts in 1828:

These principles respect the sole and exclusive sufficiency of the Holy Scripture, the Right of all men to judge for themselves in the interpretation and use of that Divine Standard; and the correlative Right to act according to their judgment in matters of Religion, so long as its Exercise interferes not with the Rights of others. As such Rights do not originate in human Laws, no human Laws can justly abridge them.<sup>33</sup>

The *Statement* continued by making the argument that state intervention in religious matters inevitably secularizes religion. "The exertion of political power for the suppression of Error, or the establishment of Truth, is presumptuous and unjust. To the exercise of this power there are no definable limits, and it invariably secularizes every form of Christianity with which it is associated." Furthermore, "Whenever the Authority of Law is brought to bear on the promotion of the suppression of theological opinions and plans of Ecclesiastical polity it must operate injuriously, whether by rewards or penalties." The Dissenters' appeal, the authors argued, was based upon "this primary ground of Religious Nonconformity." Therefore, they asserted, "it would be a violation of their duty did they not express their conscientious objection to the alliance of any Ecclesiastical Systems with the Civil Power."<sup>34</sup>

Next, the authors turned their attention to the Dissenters' specific grievances, including parochial registers, the requirements that they marry and be buried in parish churches, and the most hotly contested issue, church rates. The committee called them "inexpedient and unjust," and asked: "Is not this as degrading to her supporters, as it is unrighteous to those who Dissent from her claim? Is not the dignity of religion best consulted, when its professors render voluntary homage to its principles, and present free-will offerings for its support?"<sup>35</sup> The voluntarist logic of the committee's questions collapsed the distinction between the Dissenters' immediate petitions for relief of grievances, and their more personal views in favour of disestablishment. By utilizing a voluntary model of religious support to attack the church rate, the committee left supporters within the establishment little ground on which to claim that Dissenting grievances were not connected to the existence of the national church. The Tories would not miss their chance to pose as the sole parliamentary defenders of the Established Church. The demand for burial rights in parish churches, at the same time, seemed to many Anglicans to conflict with the Dissenters' opposition to the church rate. If they were to be

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33. *Ibid.*, 127-8.

34. *Ibid.*, 128.

35. *Ibid.*, 129-32.

buried at parish churches as a matter of right, should they not also pay for the upkeep of their local parish?

Such questions were to remain unresolved for some time, but the response of Dissenters outside London to the *Statement* was rapid. On 20 January, the committee received a letter from J.N. Goulty announcing that his group “very cordially approved” of the *Statement*. A second letter, from representatives of the Congregational Union, also expressed satisfaction with the committee’s line.<sup>36</sup> The Dissenters’ allies among the Whigs, however, were less pleased. At a meeting between Earl Grey and members of the committee, Grey “stated very decidedly that he should feel it his duty to oppose measures which might be set on foot for attacking the Establishment.” He added that, “if any violent measures were resorted to for the purpose of effecting the dis-union of Church and State it would be the surest way for Dissenters to make their Friends their Foes.” Amidst discussion of the various Dissenting grievances, the most divisive issue was the church rates. The Prime Minister agreed that “there had been great abuses in this Department which ought at all events to be remedied,” but held firmly to his opinion that “The Fabric of the Churches should be supported by all Denominations.” For its part, “the Deputation endeavoured to combat the supposed difficulties mentioned by his Lordship, and expressly stated their conviction to be, that nothing less than the entire abolition of Church Rates would satisfy the Country.”<sup>37</sup>

Lord John Russell offered the committee’s delegation “a very kind reception,” but was non-committal as to what actions the government might take. He remarked that Dissenting grievances “appeared to be deserving fair consideration,” but noted the particular problems posed by the church rate. Russell observed that its abolition “could hardly be advocated without involving the question of Church and State,” as the rhetoric of the *Statement* itself seemed to demonstrate, and he sought the committee’s advice on how to answer possible objections to Dissenting arguments.<sup>38</sup>

The General Body of Dissenting Ministers also found itself forced to respond to the changing political circumstances, and its actions further demonstrate the difficulties of balancing the demands of Dissenters throughout England with those of their allies in the government. On 28 January 1834, the group held a meeting to discuss the possibility of a petition to the government, and its stance on the question of parliamentary grants to Dissenting ministers. John Hoppus took up the matter immediately by moving that it was “inconsistent with the principles of Protestant Dissenting ministers that they [Dissenting ministers] should accept of [sic] a grant from Parliament.” John Yockney and William Wall attempted to wreck the motion, moving instead that the question of the parliamentary grant was “inexpedient to entertain at

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36. *Ibid.*, 135-6.

37. *Ibid.*, 142-3.

38. *Ibid.*, 144.

present.” Following a “long debate,” the Yockney-Wall proposal was rejected and the original motion passed.<sup>39</sup>

The next day, the secretary of the General Body, Thomas Rees, reported to the United Committee that his organization opposed continuation of the parliamentary grant. John Wilks, of the Protestant Society, pointed out that his committee also believed that the grant should be declined. Dr. Gale and Dr. F.A. Cox attempted to forge a compromise, recognizing Dissenters’ opposition to the grant, but declining to call for its abolition. Their motion held that despite the committee’s “strong” belief in the voluntary principle, its members “do not consider themselves authorized to originate any Measure for repudiating the Parliamentary Grant.” It was a declaration based upon the limited understanding that the United Committee had been formed only to address specific grievances, but the committee had already gone well beyond those parameters in announcing its support for disestablishment in the *Statement*. The motion suffered a defeat, as did another that criticized the grant, but promised to protect ministers currently receiving it from “sustaining any Inconvenience.” On an eleven to six vote, the committee instead approved a statement that straightforwardly declared that receipt of the grant was inconsistent with the wording of the *Statement* and also “undesirable and improper.”<sup>40</sup>

Just as the United Committee was finalizing its new direction, the General Body continued its discussions on drafting a letter to the Prime Minister. The meeting on 4 February opened with a letter from Thomas Aspland, advising against the idea on the grounds that the United Committee was “in frequent intercourse with Earl Grey on the subject of Dissenting grievances.”<sup>41</sup> Aware of Grey’s frustration with the Dissenters’ recent aggressiveness, Aspland probably hoped to head off any further provocation of the government ministers. Nevertheless, the General Body approved a letter that turned out to be very similar to the United Committee’s *Statement*. The order of the grievances, and the supporting arguments were nearly identical in the two documents. The primary difference was that the General Body’s letter took an even more aggressive pro-disestablishment stance. While they also backed away from directly taking up the issue of church and state “in the present state of public opinion,” the members of the General Body nonetheless asserted that “ecclesiastical arrangements patronizing a particular religious community, have led to the depression and degradation of all other Christians, and have ministered . . . to those party animosities in religion which dishonour the Christian name, and strengthen the hand of those enemies of our Holy Truth.” Where the United Committee had written of the secularizing impact of church establishments, the General Body’s letter spoke of “degradation” and the

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39. DWL, Minutes of the General Body of Dissenting Ministers, MSS 38, 286.

40. Guildhall Library, United Committee Minutes, 149-50.

41. DWL, GBDM Minutes, 292-3.

“enemies of Holy Truth.”<sup>42</sup> Given the more aggressive tone of the General Body’s letter, it is easy to see why the more moderate, Unitarian Aspland, had been eager to oppose its drafting.

One thing that clearly emerges from the records of the General Body’s debates on the parliamentary grants and disestablishment was that a significant minority of the members was hesitant, if not outright opposed, to accepting the more decidedly pro-disestablishment platform that the country Dissenters had forced on the United Committee. Some were opposed because of their support for the grant, and others out of a belief that it made for bad tactics. While there is no denominational breakdown of the votes, the record indicates the existence of a sectarian (and orthodox-heterodox) split over the issues. Two of the ministers who most aggressively opposed the new direction were Aspland and Thomas Madge, both of Unitarian views. On the other hand, those who pressed the pro-disestablishment language – John Hoppus, Thomas Berry, Dr. John Morrison, Charles Stovel – were all Congregationalists or Particular Baptists. Those orthodox Dissenters who were more sceptical of opposing the grant and drafting the letter tended to be older than those who supported the initiatives, suggesting that generational differences on political views also played their part.

The General Body followed up its letter with a delegation sent to meet the Prime Minister. The report of the meeting, on 10 February, suggests that the outcome of the meeting was less than satisfactory. Although Grey received the delegation “with great courtesy,” he expressed regret that they had brought up separation of Church and State. Repeating the concerns that he expressed to the United Committee, that raising the issue would “tend to create difficulties which might disable the administration” from passing any relief legislation, Grey added that if the Dissenters pressed the issue he would himself be “personally and decidedly against them.” The meeting did not improve. While Grey believed that the marriage bill would be satisfactory to the Dissenters, and he supported the idea of allowing Dissenters to take degrees from Oxford and Cambridge, he thought that relief on other issues would be more problematic. In particular, he “could not promise the Deputation his assistance to relieve the Dissenters from payment of Church rates,” but hoped that they would find the government’s proposal satisfactory.<sup>43</sup>

In the wake of the less than fully satisfactory meeting with Lord Grey, the General Body drafted a petition to Parliament, toning down the disestablishment rhetoric. The ministers “deem it incumbent upon them to state their opinions that these grievances have arisen from the patronage bestowed upon one religious community to the exclusion and detriment of all other professing bodies of professing Christians.” They also declared their “firm persuasion” that “Christianity was based by its divine founder on no avowed or implied alliance of his Church with the State;” rather, Christ had expressed “entire and

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42. *Ibid.*, 298.

43. *Ibid.*, 309.

absolute indifference of such association.” However, declining “at the present crisis to urge this most important point” any further, they proceeded to list their “principle practical grievances” presented in essentially the same form as the United Committee.<sup>44</sup> If the members of the General Body thought that the Whigs might be reassured by the petition’s more moderate language, they were mistaken.

In late February Russell introduced his marriage bill. It proposed a means to allow marriages to be solemnized in Dissenting chapels, but for the purposes of record-keeping Dissenters would continue to use the parochial structure for registering, and for the calling of banns. However, the bill clearly failed to meet Dissenters’ demands for a purely civil form of marriage. Russell claimed that he could not bring forward such a measure, as it “would be repugnant to the feelings of the country.”<sup>45</sup> Therefore, the bill came under immediate attack from Dissenters and their allies in Parliament. J.S. Buckingham, a friend of the Dissenters, declared that marriage was a civil contract and the Church’s interference in Dissenting marriages was entirely unacceptable to his Nonconformist constituents. George Faithful, a Unitarian who represented a large number of evangelical Dissenters, called the bill “minute and contemptible.” Joseph Hume, the radical leader, added his voice to the opposition. Russell’s reply that the prohibitive costs of a national registration system, and the difficulty of registering chapels of “obscure place,” hampered the efforts of the administration, fell largely upon deaf ears.<sup>46</sup> Opposition from the leading Dissenting organizations was thus only a matter of time. On 5 March, the United Committee resolved that the bill was “wholly unsatisfactory and unacceptable.”<sup>47</sup> The government responded quickly to such complaints first by delaying the second reading of the bill, and then quietly dropping it altogether.

At the same time, demands for disestablishment were on the increase. On 7 April, 1834, the United Committee heard from a group of Dissenters who had met at the Congregational Library four days earlier. The group was chaired by a layman, Thomas Gibson, and included the Baptist minister Charles Stovel, who had been a consistent supporter of calls for disestablishment on the General Body. Their letter to the United Committee called for the organization of a public meeting in London to draft a petition demanding the immediate separation of church and state. The members of the group claimed that there was “no doubt of unanimity upon the Grand Question of severing the Alliance of Church and State and that such a Meeting could not fail to strengthen the hands His Majesty’s Government.” With that confident hope, they asked for the United Committee’s support.<sup>48</sup>

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44. *Ibid.*, 309-11.

45. Hansard *Parliamentary Debates*, Third Series, Vol. XXII, 776-78.

46. *Ibid.*, 780-88.

47. Guildhall Library, United Committee Minutes, 170-72.

48. *Ibid.*, 186-88.

The committee sidestepped the issue by passing consideration of the public meeting to its constituent bodies. The response of the executive committee of the Protestant Society was mostly negative, passing a resolution against the public meeting on 14 April. The resolution conceded that the committee members believed "the prejudice results both to Religion and the State from the secular maintenance of an Established Church and from the investment of any particular Body of Religionists with exclusive honours, patronage, emoluments, privileges, and power." They further stated their belief that disestablishment would come some day, due to "the diffusion of truth, ... liberal and free discussion," and "wise and persevering effort." However, in 1834, "neither the Legislature nor the Government are prepared to concede" separation of Church and State, and any efforts to force the issue would "prejudice the depending attempts for much needed relief and at least defer the attainment of much real and practical good." The resolution concluded, rather cautiously, that it would "not be discreet to convene any public meeting in the Metropolis" to press disestablishment.<sup>49</sup> The moderation of the Protestant Society's response was probably driven by the practical concerns of its leading figure, the MP, John Wilks. The Dissenting Deputies also responded with caution, resolving that "although this Deputation is at all times ready to record their decided and conscientious objection to all Alliances between Ecclesiastical systems and the Civil power," a public meeting calling for disestablishment was not "expedient" at the moment. The primary reason for this was that "such measures would put an end to the negotiations [sic], now going on with his Majesty's Ministers for the redress of the political grievances of Protestant Dissenters."<sup>50</sup>

Consistent with their more aggressive stance on disestablishment, the General Body voted down resolutions put forward by more conservative ministers against a public meeting. The resolution, drafted by Thomas Russell and John Pye Smith, restated a more traditional view of the worldly and corrupting nature of politics, emphasizing the redress of "practical grievances" over engagement with politics in a more general sense. Expressing a fundamental concern over the effect of political activity on their divine mission, they asserted their "fear and deprecation" of "every movement of party agitation and violence." Moreover, as "ministers of a kingdom which is from above, and not of this world," they prayed for divine assistance "to watch over themselves lest in a season of excitement and danger they should give occasion to the reproach of sacrificing the spiritual interests of that Kingdom at the shrine of political strife and antichristian animosity."<sup>51</sup> This was a view of politics that a majority of the General Body no longer supported.

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49. DWL, Minutes of the Committee of the Protestant Society for Religious Liberty, 38.194, 14 April 1834.

50. DWL, Minutes of the Dissenting Deputies, Vol. VIII, 211-12.

51. DWL, GDBM Minutes, 15 April 1834, 335.

The General Body's votes on the public meeting demonstrate something of the growing significance of disestablishment as a focus for Dissenting political action. In spite of warnings from government ministers about the dangers of broaching the issue, and in spite of the fact that their petition to Parliament had claimed they had no intention of agitating on the question, the General Body flatly refused to oppose a public meeting calling for the immediate disestablishment of the church. It is not clear to what extent the decision was driven by tactics or principles, or how much it represented a response to conflicting pressures from the administration and from country Dissent, as opposed to taking its own line. What is clear, however, is that the unqualified logic of Dissenting political action as a disestablishment crusade was transforming the political climate. The political expectations heightened by the reforms of 1828-32, and the electoral success of their Whig allies led evangelical Dissenters to see a divinely granted opportunity to enact long-sought changes. Across the country ministers and laymen began to talk of the Christian duty of sacred action in the civil sphere. Disestablishment became the focus of this agenda, combining a framework for relieving grievances with a suitably high-minded and unselfish-sounding objective. Presbyterians, Unitarians, and the older evangelical Nonconformists, who had traditionally led the Dissenting interest with a more rationalistic and instrumentalist view of politics, rarely shared these objectives, and many of the evangelical members of the London-based organizations (those who had actually to deal with the government and political practicalities on a regular basis) required substantial prodding from the country before taking up the cause.

Historians, such as Ian Newbould and Richard Brent, have pointed to the inadequacies of the Whigs' marriage and church rate bills as the primary cause of this surge in Dissenting interest in disestablishment during the mid-1830s. Newbould claims that the bill provided the impetus for pro-disestablishment views and "prompted a breach" between Dissent and the Whigs, while Brent argues that they caused a "climacteric" in the relationship that was only closed by the rise of "liberal Anglicans" in Melbourne's 1835 cabinet.<sup>52</sup> However, the records of the correspondence and discussions of the United Committee and the General Body clearly show that country Dissenters were pushing the disestablishment line as early as 1833, well before the Whigs presented either of the two bills in Parliament. A new mood, and a new focus for Dissenting politics had already begun to emerge.

When the debates over disestablishment are considered alongside the Hankey controversy in the LMS, a broader sense of what was at work becomes evident. First, the primary impetus for change in both cases came from the

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52. Ian Newbould, *Whiggery and Reform, 1830-41: the politics of government*, (London: 1990), 273; Richard Brent, "The Whigs and Protestant Dissent in the Decade of Reform: the Case of the Church Rates, 1833-1841," *English Historical Review* (1987), and *Liberal Anglican Politics: Whiggery, Religion, and Reform*, (Oxford, 1987).

country. In each case, Dissenters outside London prodded the leadership to take a more controversial or aggressive stand on the issue. Secondly, it was an issue of principle versus pragmatism. The London organizations, and their leadership, found that their cautious and practical approach to politics no longer satisfied a country constituency increasingly unwilling to compromise fundamental principles. In the years following the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts and the passing of the Great Reform Act, the Evangelical Dissenters, rather than merely reacting to the policies of their Whig allies, had begun the process of redefining their own understanding of politics and political action.

MICHAEL RUTZ



## EDINBURGH 1910-2010: FROM MISSION TO WORLD CHRISTIANITY?

The World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910 was dedicated “To consider Missionary Problems in relation to the Non-Christian World”.<sup>1</sup> It led directly to the formation of the World Council of Churches;<sup>2</sup> it was inspirational for the Evangelical mission movement formed at Lausanne in 1974;<sup>3</sup> and it may even have indirectly influenced the open approach of Pope John XXIII when he called the second Vatican Council.<sup>4</sup> Such was its legacy that its centenary project could simply be known as “Edinburgh 2010”. The first intended outcome of the latter was to “celebrate what God has done in the growth of the Church worldwide over the past century and to prayerfully commit to God the witness of the churches in the twenty-first century”.<sup>5</sup> This apparent shift in emphasis between 1910 and 2010 from “mission” to what has become known as “world Christianity” is the concern of this lecture.

The keynote address at the Edinburgh 2010 conference was given by Dana Robert, Truman Collins Professor of World Christianity and the History of Mission at Boston University. She has described Christian mission as “how Christianity became a world religion”. Christian mission, she writes, is “a central historical process” in explaining how Christianity got to be “so diverse and widespread”.<sup>6</sup> Her book, *Christian Mission . . .*, illustrates this over two thousand years of Christian faith. I do not wish to dispute this statement in the way that Robert intends it, and I greatly value her book, but the statement carries with it certain assumptions about the meaning of “mission”, which I should like to unpack. The relatively recent but increasingly popular term “world Christianity” also needs some investigation. At the very least, it is necessary to avoid the unfortunate caricature that in 1910 Christians were all Europeans, and that the global spread of Christianity in 2010 is solely the result of their labours to export the Christian gospel through the networks of empire.

I wish therefore first to examine the meaning of mission in 1910, and

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1. Subtitle of the conference.
  2. World Council of Churches, “History of World Mission and Evangelism”, <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/who-are-we/organization-structure/consultative-bodies/world-mission-and-evangelism/history.html>.
  3. Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, “Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization Renews the Vision Billy Graham Initiated with 1974 Lausanne Congress”, 24 May 2007, <http://www.lausanne.org/news-releases/cape-town-news-release.html>
  4. Brian Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans, 2009), 11-12.
  5. Edinburgh 2010 website, About page, <http://www.edinburgh2010.org/en/about-edinburgh-2010.html>
  6. Dana L. Robert, *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion*, (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 1-2.

secondly to discuss how it has developed over a century of mission studies. Thirdly, I intend to look at the rise and meaning of the term “world Christianity”. Then, I will discuss its relation to mission in the Edinburgh 2010 project. To conclude, I would like to discuss what Christian mission is in an era of “world Christianity”.

## I Edinburgh 1910: Mission as Carrying the Gospel to the non-Christian World

In 1910 the discussion was not about mission (singular) in the theological sense in which we now use the term, nor in the corporate business sense, but about Christian missions (plural), that is missionaries and missionary work. The agenda was practical, not only because it was a conference of practitioners but also because discussion of theology was explicitly excluded in order for Protestants of different denominations to work together.<sup>7</sup> Edinburgh 1910 was called to discuss mission strategy. The nature of mission was not the question, as it was later to become; the “missionary problems” were about how to carry out what was perceived as the missionary task most effectively, efficiently, and in the shortest possible time.

Central to the planning of the conference was a decision that the world could be divided in two parts: Christian and non-Christian, the “home base” and the “mission field”. Eight “commissions” prepared resource material for the conference according to different themes.<sup>8</sup> The first of these was originally called “Carrying the Gospel to All the World”. However, from the beginning of the planning there was an assumption that there was a “home base” in Europe or the United States; this was the Christian world, which had what the other world lacked: “the Gospel”. From there missions went out uni-directionally to the rest of the world, exporting the Gospel to nations populated by what were assumed to be “non-Christian” peoples. Even so, drawing lines on the map to delineate the “non-Christian world” became fraught with difficulty, first, because Protestants could not agree whether Catholics and Orthodox Christians could be counted as such; and secondly because, even using the crude statistical measure, it was difficult to agree at what percentage a country could be termed “Christian”.<sup>9</sup> But Commission I was eventually renamed: “Carrying the Gospel to the Non-Christian World”.

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7. Stanley, *op.cit.*, 38-41.

8. The themes were as follows: I. Carrying the Gospel to all the Non-Christian World; II. The Church in the Mission Field; III. Education in Relation to the Christianisation of National Life; IV. The Missionary Message in Relation to the Non-Christian Religions; V. The Preparation of Missionaries; VI. The Home Base of Missions; VII. Missions and Governments; VIII. Cooperation and the Promotion of Unity.

9. Eventually, in order to include Anglo-Catholic missions, Latin America was excluded from consideration altogether. A compromise was also worked out in the cases of the Philippines and missions working among the Orthodox churches in the Middle East. For details of these discussions, see Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference*, 49-73.

The missionary task was primarily interpreted quantitatively as increasing the numbers of Christians in the world, and its success was measured by means of an atlas and statistical information.<sup>10</sup> Qualitatively, “the kingdom of Christ” was the main aim. Although there were differences about what would constitute the coming of the kingdom, in practice the dominant vision was that the other nations of the world would become Christian in the way in which the West was perceived to be so. This amounted to the extension of territory under Christian rule (Christendom) to cover the whole globe.<sup>11</sup> “Carrying the Gospel to the Non-Christian world” meant building up “the Church in the mission field”, Christianising societies by education, and fulfilling the “non-Christian religions” with the knowledge of Christ.<sup>12</sup> The chief means for seeing that the kingdom came within the delegates’ lifetimes was envisaged to be missionaries and missionary societies generously supported by churches in the West. The task was to be facilitated by preparing missionaries, strengthening the “home base”, working with imperial governments and cooperating with one another.<sup>13</sup>

The conference was dominated by a millennial sense of urgency for this task.<sup>14</sup> The saying of Jesus, “Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come with power” (Mark 9:1) was quoted both by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Davidson, in his opening address to the conference<sup>15</sup> and at the end of the closing speech of the chairman of the conference, John R. Mott.<sup>16</sup> Mott, who was the chairman of Commission I, urged that success in “carrying the Gospel” depended on seizing the unique “*kairos*” moment or “decisive hour” which now presented itself.<sup>17</sup> The report of Commission I emphasised that the global connectedness of 1910, brought about by imperial rule, “greatly facilitated the propagation of the Gospel and the sending forth of the pure and

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10. *Statistical Atlas of Christian Missions*, (Edinburgh: World Missionary Conference, 1910); H.P. Beach *et al* (eds.), *World Statistics of Christian Missions*, (New York: The Committee on Reference and Counsel of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, 1916).
  11. Andrew F. Walls, *The Cross-cultural Process in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission and Appropriation of Faith*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002), 49-71.
  12. Reports of Commissions I, II, III, IV. All published by Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier in Edinburgh & London, 1910.
  13. Reports of Commissions V-VIII. All published by Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier in Edinburgh & London, 1910.
  14. Stanley, *op.cit.*, 1-3.
  15. The Archbishop of Canterbury, “The Central Place of Missions in the Life of the Church”, in World Missionary Conference, 1910, Vol. IX: *The History and Records of the Conference*, (Edinburgh & London: Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier, 1910), 146-50.
  16. John R. Mott, “Closing Address”, in World Missionary Conference, 1910, *ibid.*, 347-51.
  17. John R. Mott, *The Decisive Hour of Christian Missions*, (Edinburgh: The Foreign Mission Committee of the Church of Scotland, 1910).

hopeful influences of western civilisation”,<sup>18</sup> Mott feared that this period in which the “non-Christian nations’ were “plastic and changing’, and open to Christian influence, was not destined to last long.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, it was only four years later that the world of Mott and his contemporaries was divided by war, and remained so due to protectionist economic policies, the Second World War, and the Cold War until the globalization which began after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.<sup>20</sup>

The expansionist approach was undergirded by the infant discipline of mission studies, and in particular at Edinburgh by the work of Gustav Warneck (1834-1910), who from 1896 had occupied the first chair of mission studies, at the University of Halle.<sup>21</sup> He argued the superiority of the Christian religion over others, and showed historically how Christianity had been spreading across the world from earliest times. Warneck used the language of military conquest to describe the Christian mission and this was carried over into the discourse and reports at Edinburgh in 1910.<sup>22</sup> However he was worried by millennialist urgency because he insisted on the Christianisation of whole people groups by a gradual process, requiring long-term missionary presence.<sup>23</sup>

An earlier generation, including Henry Venn (1796-1873), Secretary of the Church Missionary Society, had much greater confidence in the ability of Africans and Asians to lead and organise their own churches, advocating the “three-self principle” that churches ought to be self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating, which should result in the “euthanasia of a mission”.<sup>24</sup> But by 1910, as the SPG missionary Roland Allen complained, most missionaries seemed to envisage a more or less permanently paternal relationship between the European churches and those in Africa and Asia.<sup>25</sup> Although there were some in 1910 who foresaw a reciprocal influence of

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18. Although it also recognised that “the drawing together of the nations and races as a result of these improvements has made possible the more rapid spread of influences antagonistic to the extension of Christ’s Kingdom”. World Missionary Conference, 1910, *Report of Commission I: Carrying the Gospel to All the Non-Christian World*, 21-22.
  19. Mott, *The Decisive Hour of Christian Missions*, 39-42.
  20. See Peter Sedgwick, “Globalisation”, in Peter Scott and William T. Cavanaugh (eds.), *Political Theology*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 486-500, at pp.487, 489-90.
  21. “Gustav Warneck”, in Gerald Anderson *et al* (eds.), *Mission Legacies: Biographical Studies of Leaders of the Modern Missionary Movement*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994), 373-82.
  22. Timothy Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century*, (Cambridge: CUP, 1994), 31-2.
  23. David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 336.
  24. “Henry Venn”, Gerald Anderson *et al* (eds.), *Mission Legacies: Biographical Studies of Leaders of the Modern Missionary Movement*, 541-47.
  25. Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St Paul’s or Ours?* (London: World Dominion Press, 1956; first published in 1912), 141-48.

“Asia, Africa, and Oceania” on the Western church,<sup>26</sup> for the most part the expectations of the spiritual growth of populations of the mission field were constrained by their supposed racial inferiority.<sup>27</sup> Missionaries occasionally challenged aspects of colonial policy, but as people of their time they rarely questioned the colonial system itself, or the racial theories on which it was built.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless, seventeen (or eighteen) “native Christians” were officially invited to the conference, all of them from South and East Asia.<sup>29</sup> Mott encouraged them to participate, and they made an impact out of all proportion to their numbers. One of them, V.S. Azariah, later an Anglican Bishop in South India, made an impassioned plea for a more equal relationship between the missionaries and their converts. But some missionaries received this implied criticism by an Indian Christian very badly and grunted their disapproval in the conference hall.<sup>30</sup> At Edinburgh in 1910 mission was inextricably bound up with colonial relationships, and dominated by European churches who felt they bore the primary obligation to Christianise others.

## II

### Rethinking Mission: 1910-2010

The visions of the kingdom at Edinburgh 1910 were shaped at the high point of European imperialism. Events in twentieth-century Europe soon made impossible their fulfilment in the ways in which the delegates had dreamt. First, two World Wars undermined the claim of white supremacy and the moral superiority Europeans claimed. Secondly, where this was not forthcoming for theological reasons, decolonisation, the rise of nationalism, and the growth of the churches in the global South forced a partnership and reciprocal approach. Thirdly, complaints of proselytism from Orthodox Christians, and from Hindus in India, suggested a more sensitive and respectful attitude toward the other. Fourthly, the perceived links with imperialism were experienced as damaging by many churches and subjected to harsh post-colonial criticism.

The twentieth century was a learning process for mission theologians and practitioners.<sup>31</sup> Here I will highlight developments relevant to world

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26. World Missionary Conference, 1910, *Report of Commission I: Carrying the Gospel to All the Non-Christian World*, 46-47.

27. Stanley, *op.cit.*, 132-66.

28. Bosch, *op.cit.*, 302-13.

29. The absence of Africans appears to have passed without censure, although an African appears to have been invited at the last minute. See discussion in Stanley, 91-102.

30. V.S. Azariah, “The problem of cooperation between foreign and native workers”, in World Missionary Conference, *World Missionary Conference, 1910 Vol. IX*: 306-15; W.H.T. Gairdner, *Edinburgh 1910: An Account and Interpretation of the World Missionary Conference*, (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), 109-110.

31. See Yates, *Christian Mission*; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*; Stephen B. Bevans and Roger P. Schroeder, *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004), 239-80.

Christianity from the series of mission conferences which continued through the twentieth century after Edinburgh 2010, at first organised by the International Missionary Council (IMC), and after the integration of the IMC with the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1961, by the WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism.<sup>32</sup>

The conference of the IMC at Tambaram, India in 1938, was notable for the book *Rethinking Christianity in India*, produced by Pandipeddi Chenchiah and a group of Indian Christian leaders,<sup>33</sup> which demonstrated a uniquely Indian approach to mission and theology, although this still appears marginal to the main IMC discussion.<sup>34</sup> But re-convening after the Second World War, in humbled and sombre mood, in 1947 in Whitby, Canada, members of the IMC (who were still overwhelmingly of European descent) now described themselves as mere “partners in obedience” in a mission that belonged, not to the church, but to God. In this partnership the old distinctions between the “older churches” and the “younger churches” now established in different parts of the world were declared obsolete since all were sharing in God’s worldwide mission. This new perspective was consolidated at a landmark conference in Willingen, Germany in 1952, where mission was defined as “witness” to Christ in the form of proclamation, fellowship and service.<sup>35</sup> Since these activities have been integral to the life of the local church since its inception at Pentecost, mission could no longer be seen as an optional activity for enthusiasts overseas.<sup>36</sup> It was now understood as the spontaneous outworking in the lives of all Christians everywhere of the inspiring, transforming, life-giving work of the Holy Spirit.<sup>37</sup> This redefinition was comforting to

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32. Cf. World Council of Churches, “History of World Mission and Evangelism”, <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/who-are-we/organization-structure/consultative-bodies/world-mission-and-evangelism/history.html>.
33. G.V. Job, P. Chenchiah, V. Chakkarai, D.M. Devasahayam, S. Jesudason, Eddy Asirvatham and A.N. Sudarisanam, *Rethinking Christianity in India*, (Madras: A.N. Sudarisanam, 1938).
34. Which was dominated by the results of the Hocking Enquiry (see William Ernest Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions: A Laymen’s Inquiry After One Hundred Years*, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1932), and Hendrik Kraemer’s study, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, (London: Edinburgh House, 1938). See Timothy Yates, *Christian Mission*, 70-124.
35. Norman Goodall (ed.), *Missions Under the Cross*, (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1953), 241.
36. Delegates at Willingen confessed that, “When God says to the Church: ‘Go forth and be my witnesses’, He is not giving the Church a commission that is added to its other duties; but a commission that belongs to its royal charter (covenant) to be the Church”. Goodall, *op.cit.*, 241.
37. World Council of Churches, Commission for World Mission and Evangelism, “Mission and Evangelism in Unity Today” (2000), para. 13. Published in Jacques Matthey (ed.), *“You are the light of the world”: Statements on Mission by the World Council of Churches 1980-2005*, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2005), 62-89; also available at [www.mission2005.org](http://www.mission2005.org).

missionaries recently forced by the Communist government to leave China and entrust the churches into God's hands. It was made possible at Willingen by the theological foundation laid by the Swiss theologian Karl Barth, which put mission at the heart of God, the Trinity.<sup>38</sup> Stimulated by reading the Fathers of the Eastern Church, Barth founded mission on the first sending, the sending by the Father of the Son and the Holy Spirit into the world.<sup>39</sup> The ownership of mission therefore passed from the church to God, and this approach came to be known as "*missio Dei*", or "the mission of God".<sup>40</sup>

In Ghana at New Year 1957, the new paradigm of *missio Dei* was explicit in the conference declaration: "the Christian world mission is Christ's, not ours".<sup>41</sup> A corollary of seeing mission as participation in the sending of God is that the church is no longer the sender but the one sent into the world, and is therefore missionary by its very nature.<sup>42</sup> This led to a shift from "church-centred mission" to "mission-centred church".<sup>43</sup> The logical structural outcome of the missionary nature of the church was argued to be the "integration" of the IMC with the WCC, which had been formed in 1948 by the union of other movements emanating from Edinburgh 1910.<sup>44</sup> The next conference in Mexico City in 1963, for the first time as part of the WCC, was described as a conference on "mission and evangelism". These terms, which had previously been applied to work overseas (in the IMC) and at home (in the WCC), were now treated together. Mission, it was recognised, was taking place not only from the West to the rest but in "six continents" that is, everywhere in the world, including in the so-called Christian nations.<sup>45</sup> As a result, Stephen Neill could declare that "the age of missions is at an end; the age of mission has begun".<sup>46</sup>

The *missio Dei* paradigm was strengthened by increasing dialogue within the ecumenical movement with Orthodox churches, the majority of which became members of the WCC at New Delhi. Orthodox theologians approached mission from "the fact that God is in God's own self a life of communion", and that God's involvement in history, by the mission of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, "aims at drawing humanity and creation in general into this communion with God's very life". Orthodox perspectives encouraged the

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38. The report of Willingen declared that "The missionary obligation of the Church comes from the love of God in His active relationship with [humanity]... For God sent forth His Son... God also sends forth the Holy Spirit...". See Goodall, 241.

39. Bosch, *op.cit.*, 389-90.

40. For a reflection on Willingen fifty years on, see Jacques Matthey's "Reflector's Report" at [www.oikoumene.org](http://www.oikoumene.org). Papers of the 2002 consultation on Willingen 1952 are published in the *International Review of Mission* 92/36, (Oct 2003).

41. Quoted in Bosch, *op.cit.*, 370.

42. Bosch, *op.cit.*, 372-73.

43. See discussion in Bosch, 368-9, 371-2.

44. This step was agreed in Ghana, and implemented at the Third Assembly of the WCC in New Delhi in 1961.

45. Quoted in Yates, *op.cit.*, 165.

46. Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966), 572.

development of a social understanding of the Trinity, with the three persons working together in a “programme . . . for the whole of creation”.<sup>47</sup> A *missio Dei* approach to mission theology was also seen to be endorsed by the Roman Catholic Church in 1965 in the Decree on the Mission Activity of the Church by the Second Vatican Council (*Ad Gentes*), which stated that “Missionary activity is nothing else and nothing less than an epiphany, or a manifesting of God’s decree, and its fulfilment in the world and in world history, in the course of which God, by means of mission, manifestly works out the history of salvation”.<sup>48</sup> The emphasis across all the churches was now less on sending missionaries and more on the missional presence of the church in different contexts. As the Council explained, “The pilgrim Church is missionary by her very nature, since it is from the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit that she draws her origin, in accordance with the decree of God the Father”.<sup>49</sup>

From 1963, as decolonisation proceeded apace, the WCC mission conferences represented more and more leaders of the churches in Africa, Asia and the Americas. The mission agenda naturally began to reflect some of their concerns, as in 1972-73 at the conference in Bangkok when “salvation” was redefined as including economic justice, human dignity and solidarity.<sup>50</sup> As the recipients of Western missions, sometimes they were critical of them. As a result, Western Christians began to recognise the colonial attitudes of much past enterprise, and also gained greater appreciation of the role of local evangelists and churches in world evangelisation. Non-Western perspectives forced a relativising of Western definitions of mission and recognition of the contextuality of all mission activity and reflection. This shift came about especially through the influence of Latin American liberation theology, which brought Catholics and Protestants together in a mission of “good news to the poor”. Justice for the oppressed was very much the topic of the conference in 1980 in Melbourne, Australia, under the theme, “Your kingdom come”. At San Antonio, Texas in 1989, the biblical basis of liberation theology facilitated a wide consensus about what constituted “mission in Christ’s way”. David Bosch, who was one of the drafters at San Antonio, attempted to capture this in his book, *Transforming Mission*, published in 1991. This work also introduced to a very wide audience the idea that mission constantly needed to be refined according to the context.<sup>51</sup>

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47. Ion Bria (ed.), *Go Forth in Peace: Orthodox Perspectives on Mission*, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1986), 3.

48. Vatican II, *Ad Gentes* “Decree on the mission activity of the Church”, para. 9 – available at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

49. Vatican II, *Ad Gentes*, para. 2.

50. World Council of Churches, *Bangkok Assembly 1973: Minutes and Report of the Assembly of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches*, (Geneva: WCC, 1973), 98.

51. So Bosch defined mission in thirteen different ways, including mission as “the church-with-others”, as “mediating salvation”, “the quest for justice”, “common witness”, and “action in hope”.



The rise of new Pentecostal-charismatic and other indigenous movements, especially in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and the revival of Christianity in the former Soviet Bloc encouraged the next conference at Salvador, Bahia in Brazil in 1996 to consider “gospel and cultures”. It recognised the difficulties posed by the increasingly multi-cultural nature of the churches, the presence of different ethnic churches in one locality, and the challenges to Christian authenticity and identity of pluralism and diversity in society.<sup>52</sup> The most recent conference at Athens in 2005 followed this up by focusing on healing and reconciliation.<sup>53</sup> The Athens conference was also the first mission conference to look at the topic from the perspective of theology of the Holy Spirit (pneumatology). The conference theme “Come, Holy Spirit” made explicit that mission as *missio Dei* means participating in the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was perceived to be moving across the whole creation, both in an ecological sense and also spiritually – the growth of diverse churches around the world being seen as part of the evidence for this. The work of the Spirit was described as healing and reconciling, and this emphasised that mission is now regarded as a spirituality rather than a task to be accomplished.

### III

#### The Recognition of World Christianity

In the late twentieth century, Andrew Walls and others drew attention to a phenomenon which has become known by the shorthand “world Christianity”: that is the recognition of a dual reality of a demographic shift in the global Christian population in the last century from the global North to the South, and also the way in which Christian communities are indigenous in diverse cultural contexts.<sup>54</sup> Walls noted that by around 1970 the number of Christians outside the West was beginning to exceed those within it, so that the “centre of gravity” of Christianity was shifting southward. By studying the spread of Protestant Christianity in West Africa particularly, Walls and his colleague Lamin Sanneh argued that Christian faith was infinitely translatable into different contexts and therefore could take on local expression in any setting.<sup>55</sup> This conclusion

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52. Christopher Duraisingh (ed.), *Called to One Hope: The Gospel in Diverse Cultures: Report of the Conference of the CWME, Salvador, Brazil, 1996*, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1998).

53. See Jacques Matthey (ed.), “Come, Holy Spirit, heal and reconcile”: *Report of the World Council of Churches Conference on Mission and Evangelism, Athens, May 2005*, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2008).

54. Andrew F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996); Andrew F. Walls, *The Cross-cultural Process in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission and Appropriation of Faith*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002); Lamin Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989).

55. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*, 26-42; Lamin Sanneh, *op.cit.*, 211-38.

was complemented by, and itself added historical weight to, the anthropological discovery that the Christian message becomes contextualised or inculturated in different cultures.<sup>56</sup> Thus Walls drew attention to the growing strength of Christianity in the non-Western world and its local diversity.

The southward shift of Christian populations and the “browning” of Christianity as it becomes less and less the religion of Europeans has been brought to wider attention recently by Philip Jenkins. Jenkins extrapolated growth figures to show that Africa and Latin America would soon be the most Christian continents on earth. And he imagined the implications of the fact that Christians of European descent are now in a minority among the world’s Christian population.<sup>57</sup>

The subject of world Christianity is now recognised by an online peer-reviewed journal, supported by the Luce Foundation, which exists simply “to advance the understanding of Christianity in its various dimensions on six continents in both its local and global expressions”.<sup>58</sup> However, the term “world Christianity” as used by Walls also carries a theological meaning since he regards the translatability of the Christian message as a corollary of the incarnation, and the equality of different forms of Christianity as following from the equality of Jews and Gentiles according to the Apostle Paul.<sup>59</sup> He is supported by the arguments of Bosch and others that Christianity is universally applicable and inherently contextual.

Some commentators refer to “global” rather than “world” Christianity.<sup>60</sup> In most cases these are synonymous but Lamin Sanneh attempts to make a political distinction between these terms. To him “world Christianity” is “the movement of Christianity as it takes form and shape in societies that previously were not Christian”, whereas “global Christianity” is “the faithful replication of Christian forms and patterns developed in Europe”. In this model, “world Christianity” represents a grassroots movement, while “global Christianity” is seen as the result of a more intentional, political attempt to spread particular institutions across the world.<sup>61</sup> World Christianity is a “globalization from below” as opposed to “an imposition from the world’s great powers”.<sup>62</sup> In

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56. For example, Louis J. Luzbetak, *The Church and Cultures: New Perspectives in Missiological Anthropology*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988); Aylward Shorter, *Evangelization and Culture*, (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1994).

57. Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, (Oxford: OUP, 2002), 2.

58. Dale T. Irvin and Patrick Provost-Smith, “Editorial: Introducing the *Journal of World Christianity*”, *Journal of World Christianity* 1/1 (2008), i-v, at p.i. Available online at [www.journalofworldchristianity.org](http://www.journalofworldchristianity.org).

59. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*, 26-29, 55-67.

60. See, for example, Todd M. Johnson and Kenneth R. Ross (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity*, (Edinburgh, University of Edinburgh Press, 2009).

61. Lamin Sanneh, *Whose Religion Is Christianity? The Gospel Beyond the West*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 2003), 23.

62. Joel A. Carpenter, “Preface”, in L. Sanneh & J. A. Carpenter (eds.), *The Changing Face of Christianity: Africa, the West, and the World*, (Oxford: OUP, 2005), vii-ix: vii.

practical terms, this is an impossible distinction because “global Christianity” often gives rise to “world Christianity” as local churches become independent of foreign control, and what was brought from Europe (or elsewhere) becomes “contextualized”. And syntactically, the term “world Christianity” is not free from connotations of being monolithic or culturally uniform. But what Sanneh wishes to emphasise by preferring the term “world Christianity” is valid: that is, “the indigenous discovery of Christianity rather than the Christian discovery of indigenous societies”.<sup>63</sup>

Sanneh’s reflections highlight the significant difference between 1910 and 2010. Those at Edinburgh in 1910 presumed that Christianity was being spread by top-down activity by European missionaries.<sup>64</sup> Many of these worked with governments to train a local élite whom they regarded as the foundation of the new churches. The succeeding century has shown that the work of the missionaries who originally carried the message is only the catalyst for the local activity, which is its reception, dissemination and transformation in a new cultural and social context. This reception is often by the poor rather than the élite of those nations. In 1910, it was expected that Japan and India, as the most civilised of the non-Western nations, would soon be majority Christian nations. In fact the percentage of Christians in those nations has hardly changed in a century. The greatest growth in East Asia has occurred among the Koreans, whose nation the Japanese annexed in 1910 as part of their imperial expansion across the Asia-Pacific region. Japanese imperialism was encouraged by its Western allies and condoned by most Western missionaries, including those at Edinburgh 1910.<sup>65</sup> In India, Christian growth has been mainly among the outcastes or *dalits* rather than the higher castes, and the greatest church growth of all has been in what the leaders of 1910 regarded as the “darkest” and most heathen continent: sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>66</sup> In 1910 the Pentecostal movement, which owes so much to its “Black root” in slave religion and African spirituality,<sup>67</sup> had only just got underway. Many other new grassroots movements such as African Initiated Churches have emerged since. These have been very significant vehicles of the evangelisation in the twentieth century, especially among the

63. Sanneh, *Whose Religion*, 24.

64. Stanley, *op.cit.*, 16.

65. See Kyo Seong Ahn, “From mission to church and beyond: The metamorphosis of post-Edinburgh Christianity”, in David A. Kerr and Kenneth R. Ross, *Edinburgh 2010: Mission Then and Now*, (Oxford: Regnum Books, 2009), 74-84, at p.77; cf. World Missionary Conference, 1910, *Report of Commission I*: 50, 66-67.

66. For the negative portrayal of Africa in 1910, see Teresa Okure, “The Church in the Mission Field: A Nigerian/African Response”, in David A. Kerr and Kenneth R. Ross, *op.cit.*, 59-73; Ogbu Kalu, “To Hang a Ladder in the Air: An African Assessment”, in Kerr and Ross, 91-104.

67. Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997).

especially among the poor.<sup>68</sup> Dana Robert points to the “irony” that in the post-colonial period, historians who saw world Christianity as an arm of European imperialism, failed to notice that colonial churches were actually growing much more rapidly in Asia, Africa and Latin America than ever before.<sup>69</sup> Even under the harshest Communist oppression, the church in China grew, and today China is experiencing “Christian fever”.<sup>70</sup>

#### IV

#### Edinburgh 2010: Mission as Witnessing to Christ Today

The Edinburgh 2010 project was hosted by the University of Edinburgh, a relationship facilitated latterly by Brian Stanley, Director of the Centre for the Study of World Christianity in New College which Walls founded.<sup>71</sup> Kenneth R. Ross, also closely connected with the Centre and one of the instigators of Edinburgh 2010, co-edited the *Atlas of Global Christianity*, the 2010 counterpart to the atlas of 1910. It offers an account of the altered religious landscape since 1910,<sup>72</sup> laying particular stress on the worldwide spread of indigenous forms of Christianity by treating each continent separately, in terms both of Christian presence and mission, in contrast to the emphasis on Western missionary activity to the rest of the world which characterised the earlier atlas. Andrew Walls provided the summary overview of the spread of Christianity over the centuries.<sup>73</sup> Therefore the context of Edinburgh 2010 was the perception that in the early twenty-first century we are in a new era of world Christianity, and this was explicitly stated in the publicity literature.<sup>74</sup>

In order to analyse the nature of the Edinburgh 2010 project and its relation to “world Christianity”, we will look first at its intended outcomes, secondly at its governance, thirdly at its study themes, and finally at its conference.

Of the six intended outcomes of Edinburgh 2010, the first was “to celebrate what God has done in the growth of the Church worldwide over the past century” and “to prayerfully commit to God the witness of the churches in the twenty-first century”. That is, Edinburgh 2010 was intended as a celebration of

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68. E.g. Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century*, (New York: Cassell, 1996); Allan H. Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, (Cambridge: CUP, 2004), 279; Allan H. Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism*, (London: SCM Press, 2007).

69. Dana Robert, “Shifting Southward: Global Christianity since 1945”, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 24/2 (2000), 50-58, at p. 53.

70. See the reports at the CTBI China desk, <http://www.ctbi.org.uk/>.

71. The original name of the centre at the University established by Walls was the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World. Under the leadership of Brian Stanley this has been changed to the Centre for the Study of World Christianity.

72. Todd M. Johnson and Kenneth R. Ross (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity*, xi.

73. Andrew F. Walls, “Christianity Across Twenty Centuries”, in Johnson and Ross, 48-49.

74. “Instead of being confined to the North Atlantic, there is an intentional bias to the South, recognising that Christianity’s centre of gravity has moved markedly southwards during the past century.” <http://www.edinburgh2010.org/en/about-edinburgh-2010.html>.

world Christianity, and the project espoused the definition of mission as witness to the mission activity of God which had become the consensus in the late twentieth century. The second intention was to “affirm” and “articulate” “the biblical call to mission”. Unlike 1910, in 2010 it was understood that its meaning and relevance are a matter for discussion. Furthermore, according to the third desired outcome, this discussion, or “conversation”, would take place between “older mission movements of the North and the new mission movements from the South and East”, and also “among representatives of different Christian traditions”. The third outcome reveals a tension, to which we will return, between representing the churches geographically and denominationally. As the fourth intended outcome, which was about sharing models of mission, and the opening clause of the first aim (“Churches will be provided with an opportunity to celebrate . . .”) make clear, the project was intended to serve the churches both as the chief evidence of world Christianity but also as the agents of mission. The fifth outcome was toward networking, alliances, collaboration and synergy in mission, in keeping with the multi-centred nature of world Christianity. And the sixth was an expression of the pneumatological understanding of mission, about inspiring a new vision for mission and developing holistic mission spirituality.<sup>75</sup>

Secondly, we can deduce the nature of Edinburgh 2010 from its governance. The driving forces were the Scottish churches, several Northern European Protestant mission bodies and the WCC. In effect most of the funding came from Protestant churches and agencies in Germany and Scandinavia, either directly or channelled through the WCC. The only financially significant source of non-Western funding – or even from outside Europe – for Edinburgh 2010 was from two South Korean “mega-churches”.<sup>76</sup> With this notable exception, the financial power of the churches and the vision for world Christianity appears still to lie in the North Atlantic zone. It could, however, be added that the scaling back of plans for the event in April 2009 indicates that the era when the churches of the North are able to host the others may be nearing its close.

The formal governance of Edinburgh 2010 was through a General Council of twenty stakeholders who offered to support the project.<sup>77</sup> These were mostly

75. See <http://www.edinburgh2010.org/en/about-edinburgh-2010.html>.

76. Youngnak Presbyterian Church and Yoido Full Gospel Church. Since the Protestant churches in South Korea took their indigenous life from a revival movement which was almost contemporary with the 1910 conference, it is arguably they who most preserve the Spirit of 1910. Andrew Walls, “Commission One and the Church’s transforming century”, in David A. Kerr and Kenneth R. Ross, *Edinburgh 2010*, 27-40, at p. 34.

77. The organisations were: the World Council of Churches and the World Student Christian Federation, the Protestant world denominational bodies (Lutheran, Anglican, Reformed, Methodist and Baptist), four Evangelical bodies (World Evangelical Alliance, Lausanne Movement, Latin American Theological Fraternity, and International Fellowship of Evangelical Students), the Roman Catholic Church (represented through the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity), the Orthodox Churches (represented by a lay academic of the Greek Orthodox Church), the Asian Pentecostal Society, African Independent Churches, and the Seventh Day Adventist Church. For a list with links, see <http://www.edinburgh2010.org/en/whats-edinburgh-2010/governance.html>.

global church families and international umbrella organisations, representing the world's Christians primarily according to denomination or theological confession, and only secondarily by region.<sup>78</sup> The members of the Council include all the main strands of world Christianity: Catholic, Orthodox, historic Protestant (Lutheran, Anglican, Reformed, Baptist, Methodist), free Evangelical, Pentecostal, and also some indigenous churches such as African Initiated Churches. Edinburgh 2010 included in its planning the broadest constituency in denominational terms of any world gathering to date.<sup>79</sup> However, the regional representation in governance was not so inclusive because most bodies in the General Council were global church bodies originating in the colonial era. Although they may increasingly see themselves as guided by the concerns of their majority "Southern" members, and their officer-holders may originate from the South, they retain headquarters in the global North. In terms of decision-making in Edinburgh 2010, those who were located in Western Europe, and especially the United Kingdom, had a disproportionate say by virtue of being able to attend meetings in person. The International Director was from South Africa, but based in Edinburgh, and other staff were Western.

Thirdly, we can judge the nature of Edinburgh 2010 from its study process and its study themes. Mindful of the lasting legacy of the work of the commissions which preceded Edinburgh 1910, Edinburgh 2010 began by setting up a study process. In 2005-2006 a group broadly representative of churches and regions identified nine main themes for study,<sup>80</sup> and a further seven "transversal" themes, which were intended to interact with and intersect the main themes.<sup>81</sup> Many observations could be made about the 2010 themes compared to 1910. I will restrict myself to four:<sup>82</sup> First, the 2010 themes reveal the theological shifts over the past century toward a consensus around a *missio Dei* theology. Secondly, they start from the perception of world Christianity,

78. The representation by denomination was not proportionate to numbers. If it had been, half should have been Roman Catholic. As it was, the Roman Catholic Church was represented on the General Council by only one person sent by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

79. Its nearest relation is the Global Christian Forum, also sponsored by the WCC. See [www.globalchristianforum.org](http://www.globalchristianforum.org); Huibert van Beek, *Revisioning Christian Unity: The Global Christian Forum*, (Oxford: Regnum, 2009).

80. 1. Foundations for mission; 2. Christian mission among other faiths; 3. Mission and post-modernity; 4. Mission and power; 5. Forms of missionary engagement; 6. Theological education and formation. 7. Christian communities in contemporary contexts; 8. Mission and unity – ecclesiology and mission; 9. Mission spirituality and authentic discipleship.

81. 1. Women and mission; 2. Youth and mission; 3. Healing and reconciliation; 4. Bible and mission; 5. Contextualization, inculturation and dialogue of worldviews; 6. Subaltern voices; 7. Ecological perspectives on mission.

82. For elaboration of these points see, Kirsteen Kim, "Edinburgh 1910 to 2010: From Kingdom to Spirit", *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association*, 30.2, 2010.

and therefore that mission is everywhere and multi-directional. Interest is focused less on centralised mission strategies, and more on local missionary initiatives.<sup>83</sup> Thirdly, the agenda of 2010 reflects the fact – highlighted by various forms of liberation theology – that Christians today are predominantly poor, not allied to ruling parties and have a more critical relationship to power. Lastly, we can note a change in the theological language used to describe mission. Whereas Edinburgh 1910 was concerned with advancing the kingdom of Christ, the rhetoric of Edinburgh 2010 is more about joining in with the work of the Holy Spirit. This pneumatological framework is better suited to the current form of globalisation and the concept of world Christianity.

The study groups for each of the main themes were expected to work ecumenically and trans-nationally, as well as having a balance of input from different genders and ages, and representing subaltern voices.<sup>84</sup> Those leading the main study themes also represented all the main church traditions and included various nationalities.<sup>85</sup> However, more than half of these (eleven out of nineteen) were European or of European descent, and almost all were based in Northern institutions.<sup>86</sup> Partly to address this issue, regional study processes were also encouraged, and funded, by Edinburgh 2010 in many places in the global South.<sup>87</sup> The Roman Catholic Church nominated six institutions in different continents to work on Edinburgh 2010 themes as part of the project. And many other regional, confessional, and international Edinburgh studies were organised independently in the years leading up to and including 2010. These studies were fed into the process wherever possible.<sup>88</sup> Whereas the 1910 method was chiefly to interpret data gathered by means of questionnaires sent to mission leaders and missionaries in the field, in 2010 groups devised their own methods and most proceeded by calling international consultations to share academic-style papers.<sup>89</sup> In this way it was less the phenomenon of

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83. See Daryl Balia and Kirsteen Kim (eds.), *Edinburgh 2010: Witnessing to Christ Today*, Vol. 2, (Oxford: Regnum Books, 2010), especially 116-47, 175-206.

84. Guidelines to study groups can be downloaded from <http://www.edinburgh2010.org/en/study-themes/main-study-themes.html>.

85. Each theme had two (or in one case three) conveners who were from different church traditions and regions. They were one from Aotearoa-New Zealand, four British, two Canadians (one a member of the First Nations), a German, two Greeks, a Hungarian, two Indians, a Kenyan, two Koreans, a Nigerian, a South African, and a Swede.

86. A full list of the conveners of the main study themes and their institutions can be found on the Edinburgh 2010 website.

87. India (two institutions), West, East and South Africa, Malaysia, Singapore, Latin America (four organisations), Cuba and Fiji.

88. Details of all events linked to Edinburgh 2010 can be found on the events pages of the website. Reports of the study process are also posted on the study process pages.

89. To my knowledge, this time only one group working on a study theme based its work primarily on questionnaires: the BIAMS/Global Connections/CTBI-GMN project which contributed to Theme 1. There were examples of more grassroots studies such as that being led by the Council for World Mission. Information is on the Edinburgh 2010 website.

missions that was discussed and more the concept of mission.<sup>90</sup> Although volumes are being produced – some even in hardback – as in 1910, the main medium of Edinburgh 2010 work was electronic, and the overall outcome will be the final form of the website,<sup>91</sup> on which position statements and papers delivered at the consultations are also posted, together with conference material, and many other solicited and unsolicited manuscripts. The website documents and links all the different study processes and will remain as a resource for scholars of mission for as long as websites last. The world Christianity ethos of Edinburgh 2010 is very much in keeping with the idealised conception of the web as worldwide, inclusive and open access. In practice, however, statistics show that by far the most people accessing the website and online debate were based in the West, although there was also quite a lot of activity from India.

Fourthly, we can deduce the nature of Edinburgh 2010 by the organisation of its conference. This was dominated by considerations of ecumenical and regional representativeness. There was initial debate about the appropriateness of holding a conference in Edinburgh in view of the argument that an event, or events, in the “global South” would better represent the changed Christian demographic. However, the symbolic significance of Edinburgh seems to have outweighed this. Like 1910, it was planned as a delegate conference. But unlike 1910 it was mainly a conference of global churches rather than Western mission agencies. This made it possible to aim for sixty percent of conference delegates from the global South (to represent the supposed current global proportion),<sup>92</sup> and some funds were set aside centrally to enable this. About 150 delegates were sent as part of stakeholder delegations; each stakeholder organisation was asked to make the delegation as representative as possible with regard to regions, gender, and age. A further seventy delegates were invited because of their leadership of the study groups on the main themes, their expertise on the transversal topics, or because they had organised other Edinburgh 2010 study activities in different parts of the world. The remaining eighty places were allocated to staff, worship leaders, and prominent mission and church figures. The inclusion of this last category was the main reason why the overall balance of figures did not – predictably perhaps – reach the stated targets.<sup>93</sup> Overall, although the nations represented in the study process and

90. For the results of the study process, see the conference preparatory volume, Daryl Balia and Kirsteen Kim (eds.), *Edinburgh 2010: Witnessing to Christ Today*, the website and other publications produced by the groups, many of them in the Regnum Edinburgh 2010 Series.

91. [www.edinburgh2010.org](http://www.edinburgh2010.org).

92. In addition it was stipulated that half should be women and a fifth under thirty years of age.

93. Although perhaps half of the delegates could be described as originating from outside the West, many were in fact resident in the global North, a statistic which Christians in the South criticised at the conference. See especially the reflection by Vinoth Ramachandra in the closing plenary, available in the website and to be published in the forthcoming conference report, edited by Kirsteen Kim and Andrew Anderson and published by Regnum Books International.



among conference delegates were spread across the globe, that spread was uneven and not as proportionate to Christian numbers as might have been expected.<sup>94</sup> Some areas of the world were noticeably un- or under-represented: China, Indonesia, the former Soviet Union and Central Asia, Southern Europe, the Middle East, and the Pacific Islands.

The conference was short<sup>95</sup> but proportionately more time was spent in explicit worship activity than in 1910, and in keeping with *missio Dei* theology this was planned as part of the “spiritual life” of the conference, rather than an add-on to the business meetings.<sup>96</sup> Whereas in 1910 a whole day was devoted to plenary discussion of each theme, in 2010 plenary time was strictly limited in the interests of giving as many as possible the chance to participate. The first plenary looked at “Mission in long perspective”, connecting mission today with the memory of Edinburgh 1910. The second took snapshots of “Mission worldwide”: the ministry of the world’s largest Pentecostal church, in South Korea, examples of aggressive proselytism versus witness from an Orthodox perspective, a Catholic project in Rome aiming to form children in ecumenism, and a reflection on mission to the North by an African.<sup>97</sup> The final plenary, timetabled for the Saturday evening, was used to reflect on the event and consider the Common Call, which it was hoped would be the outcome of the parallel sessions. The choice of contributors to the plenaries was influenced by the need to represent all the strands of world Christianity.<sup>98</sup> The case studies,

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94. A gathering on a *per capita* Christian basis was attempted by the Lausanne III conference in Cape Town in October 2010, but it gathered only Evangelical Christians.
95. An opening and welcome evening on Wednesday 2 June, followed by three working days, at the University of Edinburgh’s Pollock Halls. There was a final celebratory event on Sunday, 6 June 2010 at the Church of Scotland Assembly Hall where the 1910 event was held.
96. Each day’s work began at 9.00am with an hour-and-a-half spent in worship and Bible study. One-and-a-half to two hours were held in plenary daily, and the bulk of the business, nearly three-and-a-half hours (excluding breaks) took place in parallel sessions on the study themes. The remainder of each day was allocated to various optional activities. In fact the spiritual and study parts of the programme were planned largely independently.
97. “Christian spirituality and the diakonic mission of the Yoido Full Gospel Church”, Rev. Lee Young-Hoon, Senior Pastor, Yoido Full Gospel Church, Seoul; “Ecumenical charity as Christian witness”, Dr Tony Kireopoulos, Senior Program Director for Faith & Order and Interfaith Relations, National Council of Churches USA; “A missing mission? The ‘Budding Ecumenism’ Formation Project of the Centro Pro Unione”, Dr Teresa Francesca Rossi, Associate Director, Centro Pro Unione, Rome; “Mission to the North: Challenges and prospects”, Dr Fidon Mwombeki, Executive Director, United Evangelical Mission, Germany.
98. At the first plenary there was one keynote speaker, Dana Robert, a white female Methodist US missiologist. After her address, there were four “complementary perspectives” by persons whose confession, region, and gender were obviously different: Bishop Brian Farrell, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity; Revd Dr Tinyiko Maluleke, Professor of Black and African Theology, University of South Africa; Bishop Geevarghese Mor Coorilos, Malankara Syriac Orthodox Church, India; Revd Bertil Ekström, Executive Director, World Evangelical Alliance Mission Commission, Brazil.

for example, were presented by a Pentecostal pastor (male), a US Greek Orthodox lay church executive (male), an Italian Catholic theologian (female), and a Tanzanian Lutheran pastor and theologian (male) responsible for leading an international organisation based in Germany.

The bulk of the time each day was spent dealing with the nine study themes in parallel sessions, three on each day, within which there was an emphasis on group work. The conveners of the themes, together with the chairpersons appointed for the parallel sessions, were tasked with including contributions representing transversals and various regional and confessional perspectives. The feedback suggested that most seemed to be satisfied that their voices had been heard, although this was at the expense of in-depth grappling with each topic. Nevertheless, each of the nine groups came out with a short agreed statement of their key priorities for mission, and these were brought together in the “Common Call”.<sup>99</sup> This assumes the context of world Christianity with references to Christian diversity, multi-directional mission, and networking. It celebrates “the expressions of the gospel in many nations all over the world”, and “the renewal experienced through movements of migration”. The Common Call also affirms the *missio Dei* theology, the centrality of mission to the life of the church, and its holistic nature, as shown by the opening words, “we believe the church, as a sign and symbol of the reign of God, is called to witness to Christ today by sharing in God’s mission of love through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit”.<sup>100</sup>

## V

### World Christianity and Christian Mission

Edinburgh 2010 was a celebration of world Christianity but it also articulated a renewed call to mission. In this final section, I aim to consider further the suitability of the term “world Christianity”, and discuss what this means for the theology and practice of Christian mission.

Those who first floated the idea of a gathering of missionaries in 1910 intended to call it “The Third *Ecumenical* Missionary Conference” (italics added), seeing it as the successor to two previous missionary conferences in London in 1888 and in New York in 1900. In those two cases the term “ecumenical” indicated that the mission enterprise was “throughout the world”.<sup>101</sup> This is the word’s original sense, and the sense in which it was used at the earliest councils of the church. However, by 1910, “ecumenical” had begun to take on its current meaning of including all denominations and theological perspectives, and it was decided that this was not appropriate for

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99. Short reports of the discussions, together with other conference material will be published in the conference report as well as posted on the website.

100. The Edinburgh 2010 Common Call can be downloaded from the front page of the website, [www.edinburgh2010.org](http://www.edinburgh2010.org).

101. Stanley, *op.cit.*, 18-19.

what was a Protestant event. “World” was used instead because it conveyed the geographical meaning that those who gathered were directing or carrying out missionary activities throughout the world.<sup>102</sup>

Today “ecumenical Christianity” refers to a section of the global Christian community that prioritises a visible unity of churches across denominational boundaries, of which the World Council of Churches is the leading example. The word “ecumenical” has been used pejoratively by many Evangelicals to denote a doctrinally loose theology and indiscriminate inclusivism.<sup>103</sup> Because of this, it cannot at present be used to call Christians together. The Evangelical movement has attempted to use the word “whole” to capture the geographical meaning of ecumenical, adapting a phrase from a WCC Central Committee in Rolle, Switzerland in 1951: “the whole church taking the whole gospel to the whole world”.<sup>104</sup> Perhaps in future “ecumenical” may be redeemed by virtue of its use in the early Councils of the Church and its association with the words economy and ecology, which are also used to denote forms of global connectedness. In the meantime “world Christianity” seems most widely acceptable.

“World Christianity” parallels other contemporary interests such as “world literature” and “world music”. As such, it reflects political correctness and an ideology of pluralism, which is built on assumptions of universal human rights and democratic systems of representation. Despite this, affixing “world” to a subject can imply attention only to the exotic. World music and literature are predominantly understood as special interests peripheral to the main topic, which is Western literature or music. As in 1910 “world” was really used to mean Asia and Africa, so now “world Christianity” may be reduced to “the non-Western world”. The “world” in “world Christianity” should really be redundant. The need for it implies that the study of Christianity is not always treated in this perspective.<sup>105</sup> While this is so, world Christianity tends to correct a balance. Thus the *Journal of World Christianity*

102. *Ibid.*, 36-37.

103. For a classic example, see, Donald McGavran, “Will Uppsala Betray the 2 Billion?”, *Church Growth Bulletin* 4/5 (May 1968), 292-7.

104. See website of The Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization, Cape Town 2010, <http://www.lausanne.org/cape-town-2010>. The original WCC quotation is: “It is important to insist that the word [ecumenical], which comes from the Greek word for the whole inhabited earth [*oikoumene*], is properly used to describe everything that relates to the whole task of the whole church to bring the gospel to the whole world.” Quoted in WCC, “Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the World Council of Churches” (14/02/2006), at <http://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/assembly/porto-alegre-2006/3-preparatory-and-background-documents/common-understanding-and-vision-of-the-wcc-cuv.html>.

105. Dale T. Irvin, “World Christianity: An Introduction”, *Journal of World Christianity* 1/1 (2008), 1-26, at p.1. For an attempt to revise Christian history from a world Christianity perspective, see Dale T. Irvin and Scott W. Sunquist, *History of the World Christian Movement. Vol I: Earliest Christianity to 1453*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2001).

is “particularly concerned with under-represented and marginalized communities of faith, resulting in a greater degree of attention being paid to Asian, African, and Latin American experiences; the experience of marginalized communities within the North Atlantic world; and the experiences of women throughout the world”.<sup>106</sup>

“World Christianity” also implies that Christianity belongs with others as a world religion. In 1910, Christianity was regarded as *the* world religion, in the sense that it was the universal religion, the religion to which the whole world was turning, the fulfilment of all other religions.<sup>107</sup> Today, to apply the term “world religion” to Christianity often has the opposite intention. Rather than being absolutised by it, Christianity is relativised as *a* world religion, that is, one of a group of religions, all of which may be designated that way.<sup>108</sup> Christians, however, may appropriate the description of Christianity as a world religion to mean what is intended by “world Christianity”: that Christianity is widespread, locally rooted, and globally connected. They may add that theologically Christianity is inherently so, and that this is evidenced both in its historical complexity and in its contemporary diversity.<sup>109</sup>

In the world Christianity paradigm of 2010, Christian mission assumes a different nature. It is understood to be part of the greater mission of God; it is of the essence of the church and Christian life; it takes place not only in perceived “non-Christian” lands but everywhere in contextual forms; it concerns the whole person, the whole church and the whole world. Mission also assumes a different pattern. Since, as “world Christianity” implies, the Christian churches are now present across the globe, the paradigm might seem to suggest an end to missionary sending from one place to another as unnecessary and harmful to Christian unity. From the 1950s, Orthodox churches have criticised the attempts of other Christians to “proselytise” in Orthodox lands.<sup>110</sup> In the 1970s some African theologians called for a moratorium on the sending of missionaries from the West to allow them to develop their own expression of faith.<sup>111</sup> Pope John Paul II initiated a “new

106. Irvin, “World Christianity”, 1-2.

107. World Missionary Conference, 1910, *Report of Commission IV*: 267-68.

108. Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions, Or, How European Universalism Was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2005), 3-4, 23, 29.

109. Sebastian Kim and Kirsteen Kim, *Christianity as a World Religion*, (London: Continuum, 2008).

110. For example, “Christian Witness, Proselytism and Religious Liberty in the Setting of the World Council of Churches” *Ecumenical Review* (October 1956), 48-56.

111. See Adrian Hastings, *African Christianity: An Essay in Interpretation*, (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1976), 22-24; Gerald H. Anderson, “A moratorium on missionaries?”, in Gerald H. Anderson and Thomas F. Stransky (eds.), *Mission Trends I: Crucial Issues in Mission Today*, (New York: Paulist Press/Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans, 1974), 133-41.

evangelization”, which was directed at already Christianised lands – including in Europe.<sup>112</sup> And under the influence of Lesslie Newbigin particularly, movements in the West like “gospel and our culture”<sup>113</sup> and “missional church”<sup>114</sup> have so emphasised the mission of the local church that the word which was primarily associated with overseas activity has now virtually lost that dimension. But if mission is to retain something of its etymological meaning and reflect biblical patterns, then sending from one place to another, and cross-culturally, will remain important. In that case, the paradigm implies that mission should be “from everywhere to everywhere”.<sup>115</sup> Indeed, many Northern-based world churches and mission agencies have developed reciprocal patterns of sending between North and South, and encouraged South to South exchange. The Council for World Mission is a leading example of this. What is also now emerging is that there is increasing cross-cultural mission activity generated by indigenous movements in the South and East. This takes place in all directions and much of it is relatively local to home. In India, for example, Protestant churches have a century of indigenous missionary movements working with different ethnic groups within the sub-continent.<sup>116</sup>

Mission from South to North, commonly referred to as “reverse mission”, is also increasingly noticed, although not all can afford, or consider it important, to evangelise the West. “Reverse mission” is a complex phenomenon comprising several strands. In addition to those supported by Western-based movements to work in the West or invited to take part in the leadership of organisations based in the North, there are intentional sending movements by rich Christians and churches outside the West, especially in South Korea and Brazil, who can afford to support overseas missionaries.<sup>117</sup> These look to the Western missionary movement as an example to follow, and even to better, and see the West, especially Europe, as a spiritually needy mission field. Another important factor which facilitates mission to the North and West by the churches in the South, even where financial resources are lacking is migration, and the presence of diaspora communities. A striking difference between 1910

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112. Ralph Martin and Peter Williamson (eds.), *John Paul II and the New Evangelization: How You Can Bring the Good News to Others*, (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1995).

113. UK site at [www.gospel-culture.org.uk](http://www.gospel-culture.org.uk).

114. George Hunsberger and Craig Van Gelder (eds.), *The Church Between Gospel and Culture: The Emerging Mission in North America*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996); Darrel L. Guder (ed.), *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998); Craig Van Gelder, *The Ministry of the Missional Church: A Community Led by the Spirit*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007). See [missionalchurchnetwork.com](http://missionalchurchnetwork.com).

115. Michael Nazir-Ali, *From Everywhere to Everywhere: A World View of Christian Mission*, (London: Collins, 1991).

116. Beginning with the Indian Missionary Society, founded by V.S. Azariah in 1903.

117. Bertil Ekstrom, “From ‘Mission Field’ to ‘Mission Force’: The Emergence of Mission Organisations in Former Mission Receiving Countries”, unpublished PhD thesis, (Open University, 2010).

and 2010 is seen in the patterns of global migration. Whereas in 1910 Europeans were emigrating in large numbers to settle in other parts of the world, in 2010 international migration is chiefly of people from the global South to the West.<sup>118</sup> Many of these are Christians, and while most support diaspora churches as a home-from-home and an important support network while overseas, some migrants come with evangelistic intent, or while living in the West feel a call to mission and evangelism there.<sup>119</sup> Filipino domestic servants may be economic migrants but some see themselves as part of a mission movement.<sup>120</sup> West African diaspora churches probably have the most explicit mission agenda in the West. They speak out prophetically about perceived evils of Western society and their churches, among which are the largest congregation in the United Kingdom<sup>121</sup> and the largest in Europe,<sup>122</sup> seek to transform European spirituality and society.<sup>123</sup>

Christian mission is not only “a central historical process” in explaining how Christianity got to be “so diverse and widespread”. It continues as integral to the life of churches everywhere and is rethought in every generation. Many churches in the global South regard themselves as agents of the Great Commission every bit as much as the delegates in 1910, and are seeking the means to fulfil this calling on a global scale. We cannot know what will transpire one hundred years on, but we should not be surprised to find that Edinburgh 2110 is organised by Chinese Christians and considers the problems facing missions to the Western world.

KIRSTEEN KIM

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118. Hanciles, Jehu J., *Beyond Christendom: Globalization, African Migration and the Transformation of the West*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008), 172-73.
119. Claudia Währisch-Oblau, *The Missionary Self-perception of Pentecostal/charismatic Church Leaders from the Global South in Europe: Bringing Back the Gospel*, (Leiden: Brill, 2009); Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, “African-led Christianity in Europe: Migration and Diaspora Evangelism”, *Lausanne World Pulse* (July 2008), <http://www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles.php/973>. “Ministering to Diasporas: An Interview with Dr. Sadiri Joy Tira”, *Lausanne World Pulse* (March 2009), <http://www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles.php/1110>; *Journal of World Christianity* 3/2 (2010).
120. Filipino International Network, <http://www.fin-online.org/>.
121. Kingsway International Christian Centre, London. Pastor: Matthew Ashimolowo. <http://www.kicc.org.uk/>.
122. The Embassy of the Blessed Kingdom of God for All Nations, Kiev. Pastor: Sunday Adelaja. <http://www.godembassy.org/en/embassy.php>.
123. Gerrie ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise: African Christians in Europe*, (Cardiff: Cardiff Academic Press, 1998); Afe Adogame, Roswith Gerloff and Klaus Hock (eds.), *Christianity in Africa and the African Diaspora: The Appropriation of a Scattered Heritage*, (London: Continuum, 2008).

## REVIEWS

***Reformation Christianity*. Edited by Peter Matheson. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press/Edinburgh: Alban Books, 2010. A People's History of Christianity, 5. Pp.xvi + 306. £16.99 (Pbk). ISBN 978-0-8009-7235. Illustrated.**

Reformation Christianity is the fifth volume of a seven volume series entitled "A People's History of Christianity". In the Foreward to this volume the General Editor, Denis R Janz, explains that the series is a ground breaking look at the history of Christianity through the eyes of "the people", "the laity", "the ordinary faithful". Extolling the virtues of such an approach should be an easy task for a reviewer; however, from the moment I turned the first page to the image of Luther "as the Wittenberg nightingale" on page 276, the nagging question percolated in my mind: "Can such a history really be uncovered?" Indeed within the book there is some concession made that such an attempt to unearth the Christian lives of the "voiceless, ordinary faithful" is still in its infancy and that the task is not straightforward. The source material for researching the illiterate masses is always going to come from, and be interpreted by, a more educated élite.

Having said that, for one who has genealogically dabbled and investigated the stories of my own ancestors, the thought of discovering the day-to-day reality of my spiritual forebears was an exciting prospect. The volume's contributors are of good pedigree and offer distinct perspectives on the period. Part One explores Rural and Urban Piety in Europe, with Margo Todd focusing on the English Reformation. Part Two, "From the Cradle to the Grave", gives insight into the Church's role in the significant events of people's lives. Part Three takes an ethical, theological and linguistic perspective on the period. Overall the eleven chapters offer new insights into the lives of the past with a scholarly authority that has to be respected. There are some wonderful cameos and periscopes into daily life, such as Isaac Archer's account of his wife's childbearing experience, and the trouble that pews caused even in the early-seventeenth century, especially for one particular pastor's wife.

To read this book is a joy and it does, without doubt, leave one with new perspectives on these old events. It is beautifully illustrated with Figures and Plates which are used to aid the telling of the story. Nevertheless, I am still left pondering a number of questions: how much can be gained from observing a painting or woodcarving and how much can one legitimately read into a ledger entry or will before it becomes a wonderful tale told, rather than historical fact recorded? Also considering the number of references to Calvin, Luther and others, to what extent is this really what it sets out to be, "the voice of the voiceless"?

JASON ASKEW

***The Westminster Handbook to Martin Luther.* By Denis R. Janz. The Westminster Handbooks to Christian Theology. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox Press / Edinburgh: Alban Books, 2010. Pp. xviii + 147. £19.99. ISBN 978-0-664-22470-7.**

As with other volumes in the Westminster Handbooks to Christian Theology series, this book does not offer an evaluative overview of its subject and his work, but instead lists fifty-eight key theological themes and offers entries of varying length on each one. As might be expected, the articles concentrate on Luther's ideas themselves, with all the information garnered from primary sources. Indeed, the author confesses that he quotes nothing from secondary literature, as "this was a way of letting the color and emotional power of Luther's style creep into my text". Nevertheless, what remains is an *interpretation* of Luther's work and, as Professor Janz is one of the most prominent scholars of Luther's writings, he is well placed to give account of the great reformer's views on various subjects.

Each entry follows a similar pattern. The author suggests the importance of the subject within Luther's works, he then suggests the intellectual context by reference to Luther's theological antecedents before entering into a chronological account of what Luther said, including a comment when he appeared to say something new, something significant, or simply changed his mind. On the whole, these are descriptive and analytical rather than evaluative, accounts, and all the expected themes are present; Atonement, Bible, Christology, Church, Faith, Free Will, Gospel, Grace, Law, Predestination, Resurrection, Sin, Vocation and so on. There are also some (possibly) unexpected entries, Angels, Apocrypha, Decalogue, Descent into Hell, Extreme Unction, Mary, and so forth. The clarity of exposition can be demonstrated with reference to two particularly important entries: Justification and the Lord's Supper.

Professor Janz explains that "justification" can be found as a significant theme in virtually all of Luther's major writings, and a minor theme elsewhere. He goes on to say that the debate itself was not new at the time of the Reformation, but can be traced through the medieval period back to Augustine where it is to be located in the various disputations on "nature and grace". Basically, justification is the means of transforming the sinful into the righteous. As a result, Luther's attitude towards sin must first be understood, and for him it was "an entire mode of existence characterised by unbelief, idolatry, efforts at self-justification, ingratitude, pride and egocentricity". Even the most intense moral effort could do nothing about humanity's sinful state. It could only be transformed by faith, namely "a trusting confidence that I am the object of [God's] love". The author explains that Luther's views about the result of justification by faith are complex, partly because of his insistence that the Christian remains both sinful and righteous (*simul iustus et peccator*), but he seems to have believed that faith enabled "a movement or a journey toward



righteousness” and thus involved a process of sanctification (a theme which, perhaps unexpectedly, is not contained separately in the volume).

Similarly, the entry on the Lord’s Supper recognises that Luther believed the communion meal to be the means by which the divine becomes present, something that caused him much concern in his youth. The author demonstrates how Luther’s early thinking on the subject was guided by the scholastics who preceded him, especially Peter Lombard, Thomas Aquinas and John Duns Scotus, but that he rejected the claim that the sacrament is efficacious by nature of its performance (*ex opere operato*) because it did not give the recipient’s faith a prominent enough place. He developed a view of the sacrament as “testament” in which it highlights God’s promise, signified by the bread and wine, and received by faith. Later, Luther was caught up in the controversy around the Lord’s presence in the supper, owing to his rejection of the doctrine of transubstantiation. For Luther, Christ was present everywhere (his doctrine of ubiquity), but he ordains that he be understood through his word (through preaching). He concluded that Christ’s presence in the Supper was real, but not literal, though he refused to make this an article of faith, stating that the gospel required freedom from such intellectual shackles.

This is a “warts and all” account, as the careful treatment of Luther on “Judaism/Jews” reveals. For while Professor Janz draws attention to the technical differentiation between medieval religious anti-Judaism and more modern racial anti-Semitism, and demonstrates that – for reasons that are not always discernible – Luther’s anger and even hatred of the Jews reached different levels at different points in his life, he nevertheless concludes that “Luther’s hatred of the Jews is unforgivable because he knew better”; Luther knew that *hatred* was “never the Christian way”.

This is a book of profound scholarship condensed neatly and lucidly into readable entries. Nevertheless, it is not one to be read from cover to cover, but a reference volume to dip into as and when the reader requires both a summary of Luther’s thought on a certain topic and a clue as to which writings would provide more detail. There is a useful chronology at the front of the book, and suggestions for further reading at the back.

ROBERT POPE

***Luther*. By Scott H. Hendrix. Nashville Tn.: Abingdon Press / Edinburgh: Alban Books, 2009. Abingdon Pillars of Theology. Pp.x + 90. £8.99. ISBN 978-0-687-65641-7.**

This book, written by the James Hastings Nichols Professor of Reformation History and Doctrine Emeritus at Princeton Theological Seminary, is one of a series of books (Abingdon Pillars of Theology) on the work of major theologians, which are intended to “help students grasp the basic and necessary facts, influence and significance of major theologians”. *Luther* fulfils this purpose and is of value not only to students, but also for a much wider reading public. The five pages of references (mostly to the American edition of Luther’s works), a large bibliography (almost all by American authors), and a full index, make it a useful work of reference.

In eleven chapters the author shows how Luther’s theology developed from his study of the Bible, and particularly from his lectures on certain biblical books, especially the Pauline epistles. The insights that came to him determined how he dealt with the issues of the day – initially with the current teaching and piety of the Roman Church, which he came to see as un-biblical. So, his intention was to reform the Church, not to divide it; but, almost inevitably, he came into conflict with the authorities, both ecclesiastical and political. Ultimately this led Luther to realise that he had to define his total theology which he sought to do in his exposition of Trinitarian doctrine – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And his firm biblical basis for his teaching led to his work, with others, on the German Bible (so that ordinary folk could read it), and to his conviction that there are only two sacraments: Baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

Sometimes such insights led Luther to be too dogmatic so that he refused to understand the position of those who disagreed with him. This weakness comes out clearly in his clash with the Swiss Reformers on the nature of the elements in the Communion Service.

Luther worked in the context of his time. The development of the printing press enabled his views to be widely disseminated in print. He was personally grateful to be able to use Erasmus’s recently published edition of the Greek Text of the New Testament. Thus his life and work is properly seen to occupy a position at the beginning of the modern era, which leads the author to his final chapter asserting the continuing importance of Luther for theology today.

There is a chronology of Luther’s life (1483-1546) on pages ix and x, but the reader who will gain most from this excellent book is one who has some knowledge of the circumstances and nature of the ninety-five theses, Diet of Worms and Augsburg, in the context of the relation of the many small German States within the Holy Roman Empire.

RONALD BOCKING

***Mansfield's Ministry: A Celebration of Ordination Training at Mansfield College Oxford, 1886-2008.* Edited by Anthony Tucker. Occasional Publication No. 2. The United Reformed Church History Society, 2009. Pp. 103. £7.50. ISBN 978-085346-270-5.**

The removal of Spring Hill College from Birmingham to Oxford – where it was renamed “Mansfield” – in 1886 came as a result of the opening up of Oxford and Cambridge Universities to Nonconformists. The needs of undergraduates, and others, led to the establishment of the College Chapel, with its Sunday public worship and, later, Society. It was also the recognition that Congregationalists needed a College which would foster scholars equal to, and in relation with, the University. So, for 123 years, until 2009, Mansfield College trained ministers for the Congregational and United Reformed Churches. Since that date, Mansfield, as a College of the University, has continued to have an important role in theological teaching in the University.

*Mansfield's Ministry*, edited by Anthony Tucker, is a welcome publication to mark the end of ministerial training and to survey what has been achieved. There are nine essays: on the history of the College (R. J. McKelvey); its relation to the Ecumenical Movement, noting some of the people involved in vital stages (Donald Norwood); the contribution to Biblical Studies – when such names as C. H. Dodd, G. Buchanan Gray, and G. B. Caird come immediately to mind (Walter Houston); the value of the Chaplaincy to all undergraduates (Norman Hart); Mansfield's contribution to liturgy, worship and hymnody, evoking memories of Nathaniel Micklem and Erik Routley – what some called the New Genevan Movement (Colin Thompson); Mansfield and North America (Charles Brock); Mansfield and the Congregational Federation (Janet Wootton); a Century of Women (Kirsty Thorpe); and a short note by Donald Sykes on “Mansfield and the University”. These are followed by brief contributions by former students between 1942 and 2007 – all but one favourable and appreciative. And the full “Index of Names” adds to its value as a work of reference. *Mansfield's Ministry* provides, within a short compass, a valuable survey of the place and influence of Mansfield College in the life of the Churches, through the work of its alumni.

Inevitably, in a publication so limited for space, there are aspects for which one would ask for more. Thus, there are references to Mansfield's alumni serving through the London Missionary Society (and sequel: the Council for World Mission), and leading in the Churches they served. What is not clear is whether all Mansfield ordinands were acquainted with the tenets of other faiths, now an issue much nearer home.

R. J. McKelvey stresses that one of the main purposes of moving to Oxford in 1886 was to train scholars in theological and biblical disciplines. A footnote to Walter Houston's essay on the contribution of Mansfield College to Biblical Studies lists twelve Mansfield alumni who have “never held a teaching post at Mansfield, but have taught or published in the field

of Biblical Studies” – and he adds that there could have been more.

This points to the one serious omission from the book. For part of the ministry of Mansfield College has been in training ministerial scholars who have taught in other colleges, and so influenced many more ministers. A glance at Wales recalls Vernon Lewis and Pennar Davies at Brecon; Thomas Rees, John Morgan Jones and R. Tudur Jones at Bala-Bangor. Some of these were Church Historians as was “our famous Mansfield historian, Geoffrey Nuttall”, D.D. (Oxon) – by thesis – in his early thirties, FBA. Geoffrey was an alumnus of Mansfield College, always stating that he was first and foremost a minister, who influenced generations of students for the ministry by his teaching, scholarship and personality during his thirty-two years on the staff of New College, London. Those named are only some of the fruits of the original purpose of Mansfield College and they are equally part of “Mansfield’s Ministry”.

RONALD BOCKING

***Barth Reception in Britain.* By D. Densil Morgan. London: T & T Clark, 2010. Pp.viii + 312. £65.00. ISBN 978-0-56701-186-0.**

This is a learned book, informed by wide and deep reading of both Barth and those who received him – and those who received him not. But it is not just a history of ideas: the theology is concisely, socially, and culturally located.

This is an important book, a kind of exercise in reader-response criticism, perhaps not unique in tracing the history of what later or modern theologians have made of an earlier one – Fergus Kerr’s excellent *After Aquinas: Versions of Thomism* (2002) comes to mind – but it is nevertheless rare in the thickness and colour of its thread. Indeed I hope it may serve as a paradigm and inspiration for others to do the research and writing on, say, Bonhoeffer reception in the United States.

This is an exciting book. Morgan cites Hans Frei’s observation that “reading ‘Barthians’, unlike Barth himself, can often be painfully boring.” This book is not boring. It reads like a road movie, moving in two tracks as it follows both Barth’s own Porsche of theological development, as well as the ensuing vehicles in the inside lane, upmarket and second-rate, that keep up, break down, or turn into cul-de-sacs. And if it starts off slowly, that is because the reception was slow – Adolf Keller, the Swiss ecumenist and conveyor of continental theology to Britain and America, was the herald of coming good – but it quickly speeds up until by the Second World War, you are watching a thrilling, exhilarating chase.

This is also a fair book. Morgan is a theologian who clearly holds Barth in

esteem and affection, but although he is not averse to the odd swipe (as he puts it in one instance) at the “spectacularly wrongheaded” response to his mentor, his criticisms are always judicious and often delivered with wry Welsh wit. Indeed the author is clever enough to provide sufficient quotation to let the good run free while the ugly are hoisted by their own petard.

The major disciples are all here, from Edwin Hoskyns and Daniel Jenkins, to T. F. Torrance and Colin Gunton. So too are theologians and church leaders who may and should be known in Britain but about whom the response “*Who?*” may be forgiven among the non-British: the Scot John McConnachie, the Englishman Nathaniel Micklem, and the Welshman John Edward Daniel, for example. And then there are the “minor” figures who turn out to be not so minor at all, not least the contingent of Welshmen who were as fired by Barth as the phalanx of Scots, but who thought, taught, and preached in the language of angels.

The usual suspicions are all here too: in the post-*Römerbrief* years, concerns about human agency in Barth’s ethics, about the impact of his rediscovery of eschatology and the divine transcendence on history and experience, about his rejection of natural theology and alleged cultural pessimism; in the post-war years, Niebuhrian dismissals of Barth’s neo-orthodoxy and Cold War politics, and evangelical distrust of his soteriology and even the state of his soul (the famous Welsh fundamentalist, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, virtually asking, “But has he been *saved?*”); and during the 1960s, the patronising liberal banalities about his datedness and irrelevance in a “world come of age”.

And there are surprises, like the indolence of the English Presbyterians in contrast to Congregationalists, and the enthusiasm of certain Anglo-Catholics rather than evangelical Anglicans, during the initial stages of Barth reception in the 1920s. There is drama, like the eyewitness account of the Welsh student Ivor Oswy Davies on the public dismissal of Barth from his teaching post in Bonn in December 1934: “there, in that ritual of darkness, I witnessed the University of Bonn losing its very soul”. And there is hope that the tide-turning resurgence of British Barth studies in the late twentieth century might continue to follow the trajectory on which we find it in the second decade of the second millennium.

Are there no flaws? None as far as I can see in the execution of what Morgan set out to do, what he calls “an exercise in Bangor theology”, a descriptive history of British Barth reception (though I wish he himself had followed the trajectory beyond the nine-page “Postlude: Barth in Britain 1968-86”). Morgan is a fly on the wall, and only occasionally a mosquito. If you want a Barthian bee making honey, you will have to go to Morgan’s delightful *The Humble God: A Basic Course in Christian Doctrine* (2005). But I do have one huge complaint: Barth was a great admirer of Bonhoeffer’s *The Cost of Discipleship*, but I do not think he had in mind paying £65 for a book.

KIM FABRICIUS

***This is Our Song: Women's Hymn-Writing.* By Janet Wootton. London: Epworth, 2010. Pp. vi + 336. £35.00. ISBN 978-0-7162-0655-2.**

Janet Wootton is well known as a Congregational Minister, a theologian and a feminist. All three aspects of her personality come through loud and clear in this book. She sets out to survey the hymn-writing of women from the early days of the Church to the present day. She does so with painstaking research, fascinating insight and considerable interest.

The book divides into two parts. Part One contains chapters dealing with the pre-reformation period; the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; the nineteenth century; and the modern era. One would not have expected much hymn material from the earliest of these periods – after all, not many hymns of any sort from that period are still in use. Dr Wootton has discovered a good deal of verse, however, from a number of female writers – Radegunde, Heloise, Hildegard of Bingen and others – much of which was probably not used in the way we think of using hymns, but more of which undoubtedly would have been if women's contribution had not been ruthlessly suppressed by a male-dominated Church. Looking at the Reformation period, once again few women have made a lasting contribution to the corpus of hymns, women still being kept in the background, but Dr Wootton has unearthed poetry from continental writers such as Vittoria Colonna (fl.1538), Antoinette Bourignon (fl.1650), Elisabeth Creutziger (fl.1530) and others, some of whose work was translated into English around the time of the Methodist revival. She also alludes to English writers, among them Anne Steele and Ann Dutton, who made a considerable contribution in the eighteenth century. The nineteenth century produced a galaxy of female hymn-writers, many of them the wives or daughters of evangelical clergy, including Frances Ridley Havergal, Catherine Booth-Clibborn, Fanny Crosby, and Cecil Frances Alexander. Dr Wootton rightly gives much space to them, noting a particularly significant feature of female writing from this Victorian period: the number of hymns they wrote for children to sing. A second chapter dedicated to this era reminds us that there is a group of female writers devoted not only to individual salvation but also to social reform. These, often with a Unitarian background, include such writers as Sarah Flower Adams, Julia Ward Howe, Anna Laetitia Barbauld, and Adelaide Anne Procter, many of whom argued among other things for the full equality of women and their rights. Finally we come to the modern period – often referred to as the time of the “hymn explosion”. Names like Fred Pratt Green, Fred Kaan, Caryl Micklem, Alan Gaunt, and Brian Wren are familiar to all who worship in the Reformed Tradition today. Inexplicably (but Dr Wootton naturally makes a great deal of this) all these are men. At a time when the rights of women were increasingly asserted, and inclusive language became *de rigueur*, the twentieth century produced few female hymn-writers. The author is at a loss to explain this.

As something of a corrective to the forgoing, Part Two of the book consists of edited contributions from ten contemporary women hymn-writers, including

Ruth Duck, Kathy Galloway, Betty Carr Pulkingham and June Boyce-Tillman, whose names have become well-known in at least some parts of the contemporary Church. These contributions to Janet's book, mainly in their own words, are a valuable commentary on the present-day hymn-writing scene.

This is a scholarly, but readable book, presenting a theme that has not hitherto been tackled as popularly as it should be. The author supplements each chapter with a wealth of footnotes, gives us a bibliography of over three hundred books and provides copious and helpful indices.

C. KEITH FORECAST

***A Dictionary of European Baptist Life and Thought.* Edited by John H. Y. Briggs. Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2009. Studies in Baptist History and Thought. Pp.xxiv + 529. £39.99. ISBN 978-1-84227-535-1.**

First, a declaration of interest; I have several short articles in this dictionary. However, at 541 pages of text and indices, and an A-Z of entries, there is a rich compendium of wisdom and knowledge enclosed in this book. The intention of the dictionary is to provide a resource of Baptist thinking and theology, and to give access to the riches of this tradition both for Baptists in Europe, and for others who live alongside them.

The Baptist tradition in Europe has long been overshadowed by the much stronger tradition in the United States. But though there are commonalities, they are not the same, and it is important that the European history and current life be well represented, and that its own varieties of theology and practice are also made clear; and that is the intention of this dictionary. Should you wish to know about the breadth of Baptist thinking about the devil, or an introduction to the biography of Thomas Helwys, the varieties of legal positions occupied by Baptist churches in different countries or reflections on Baptists and sport, then this is the book in which to find the information. Drawing on the learning and insight of a wide range of scholars from across Europe, this is a unique source for understanding who Baptists are, how they have walked through their history, and what their contribution has been to the wider Christian landscape of Europe.

Of course, there will be gaps; there will be questions that people want to ask that have not been covered. But there are also things here that readers will not realise they did not yet know, and the discovery of them will delight, surprise and deepen understanding of this community of Christians. Many of the articles also include lists of resources for further reading, and so make possible further research on particular issues.

This is a remarkable book, with a surprising width of material. It will surprise, encourage and deepen understanding, and Baptists throughout Europe are glad that it has been published.

RUTH GOULDBOURNE

***Four Philosophical Anglicans: W. G. De Burgh, W. R. Matthews, O. C. Quick, H. A. Hodges.* By Alan P. F. Sell. Farnham: Ashgate, 2010. Pp. xi + 327.**

With characteristic ecumenicity the indefatigable Alan Sell here considers the contribution of four Anglicans, “writers who, although they may never be named on lists of ‘set texts’, nevertheless had things of importance to say”. These were indeed significant Anglican philosophers, overshadowed perhaps in their ecclesiastical context by two towering figures – William Temple and Donald M. Mackinnon (though, interestingly, Quick was one of the remarkably few theologians I ever heard Mackinnon quote). The book is not, as the title might be thought to suggest, a study of these philosophers as Anglicans but an examination of their contribution to twentieth-century thought as philosophers, not forgetting or indeed ignoring their context as distinguished members of the Anglican fold. To have had the occasional comment on that context developed into a full picture would have been very interesting: for instance, one of the two such references regarding de Burgh is his disparaging comment on the intellectual quality of church leaders. Each of the four studies is introduced by means of a brief biographical sketch and a survey of publications, displaying the thoroughness of Professor Sell’s investigations.

Older readers will be pleasantly reminded, as I was, of de Burgh’s work; for, though I cannot say that I have paid very much attention to it since, I do remember clearly the great impression it made on me as an undergraduate. Reading this review of his work has made me realise how significant indeed his philosophical achievement was. I would hazard the guess that, for all his judicious recognition of the merits of each of the four, de Burgh was the one to whom the author warmed most. He rightly applauds the range of de Burgh’s intellect; for here was someone who was ahead of his time in his knowledge and understanding of both Plato and Neo-Platonism and especially of the rich harvest of medieval thought. Though very much aware of the differences between Christianity and Plato, such was de Burgh’s sensitive appreciation of the contribution of Greek Philosophy that he was anxious to stress how not only Plato and Aristotle but also Stoicism had influenced early and later Christian thought. The detailed account of his work here given brings out very clearly his main objective of showing the possibility of harmonising the rival claims of reason and faith. Some philosophers might react very negatively to his rhetoric; but it seems to me that he understood the heart of the matter when he said that the Incarnation finally laid the ghost of the two-world philosophy that was Platonism’s stumbling-block. De Burgh’s moral philosophy and his neat account of the relation of morality to religion are carefully examined by Sell as is his rather restrictive definition of Christian ethics. As one recalls his appreciation of the legacy of the ancient world, his unstinting praise of Kant and his devastating judgement on the poverty of pedagogy’s immense literature, one is all too clearly aware that this was a powerful and a very humane philosopher.

We come next to W. R. Matthews. Readers who, like myself, attended



conferences of the Society for the Study of Theology will remember him as a quiet and gracious character. They will therefore agree with the author's judgement that Matthews was not a proud man so that his remarks in his autobiography about himself and F. R. Tennant having been overlooked in election to the Gifford Lectureship cannot be dismissed as arrogance. Matthews's terse and indeed self-deprecating comment will provide any historian of that lectureship with a nice problem. The compact account of Matthews's life and significant achievement is followed by a neat summary of the general themes underlying Matthews's work – the experiential basis of religion, the psychological interest, the relation between religion and science and the need for a viable apologetic. The first is illustrated by Matthews's editorship of the distinguished series, Library of Constructive Theology. Indebted as he was to Otto, Matthews thought Otto defined religious experience too narrowly as non-rational. Opposing the view that religious experience is the sole basis of religious belief he made two important points – any experience is open to adverse criticism and, secondly, the criterion for choice of any one species of religious experience as normative must lie outside experience. His interest in Psychical Research might strike one as odd; but judicious philosophers such as C. D. Broad and H. H. Price were equally positive in their attitude. What is strange is his claim that though psychic phenomena afford no direct proof of God they are “a ‘standing refutation’ of Hume's argument against miracles”. His estimate of the traditional proofs is very just – they are ways of verifying the God hypothesis. Equally just is Sell's unease with talk about “the God hypothesis”: in the context of either belief or unbelief God is not a hypothesis. No rationalist, Matthews had a clearly personal and Christocentric doctrine of God as love and he rejected any view of the Trinity as economic. The study is rounded off by an account of Matthews's contribution to ethics where I find two points of greater value – ethical judgements have a metaphysical dimension and Christian ethics have a clearly social dimension. Reviewing the picture one can see why Sell finds a tension in Matthews's thought between an older apologetic starting-point and a thoroughly Christocentric one.

O. C. Quick will be perhaps the best known of these four thinkers, his *Doctrines of the Creed* continuing to be widely read. As his early death highlights both the extent and the quality of his output one is particularly grateful for this careful and comprehensive study. We are given a very clear picture of Quick as strongly intellectual but essentially a man of the *via media*, neither traditionalist nor “modern”, balancing orthodoxy with liberalism and firmly rooted in the Bible. Sell is quick to point out that Quick's lack of real knowledge and understanding of the Reformation led him to miss his target when he talks of “Protestantism”. Though this illustrates the gulf that remained between Anglicanism and the Free Churches well into the twentieth century it should be remembered that, like Michael Ramsay after him, he was very appreciative of Forsyth as a theologian and similarly recognised R. W. Dale's quality. Nor was he deficient in ecumenical interest and effort. Time and again

in this study we have examples of his intellectual perspicacity. For instance, he diagnoses the philosophical problem underlying Barthianism as the assumption that because revelation is God's act the reality revealed cannot become the object of man's thought. Another is the criticism of idealism, Platonic or post-Hegelian, that it cannot make room for incarnation and atonement, with the result that it tends to skirt the problem of evil. For Quick, value was a cardinal principle and axiology was ground on which he could defend theism's claim as a rational interpretation of the universe. Consistent with this is his interpretation of the Christian ethic as one of creative self-sacrifice. Creeds, he insists, are not the objects of faith but are aimed at teachers of a less mysterious faith. Sell concludes his survey with a clear and careful account of Quick's creative doctrines of atonement and the sacraments. Sacraments are signs and instruments. The bread "symbolizes or signifies" (and we note the logical ambiguity) the body: it is "the expressive symbol and instrument of himself". Interestingly, then, the doctrine of transubstantiation is clearly abandoned and the rather ambiguous talk of signification leads us back to something very much like Wycliffe's view. Indeed Quick may be thought to be here a precursor of some latter-day Catholic theologies of the real presence. Despite his occasional caveats and criticisms Sell concludes by applauding Quick's skills and intellectual discrimination as essentials of theological thought, painting him as someone for whom, as Temple said, "God was in all his thought".

The last of our quaternity is H. A. Hodges, known widely in the 1950s for his *Christianity and the Modern World-View*, a beacon of Christian rationality when scientific dogmatism was beginning to be fashionable. A Methodist converted to Anglicanism after a period of scepticism he was prominent in fostering relations between the Church of England and Orthodoxy, becoming well-known to non-Anglicans as well as non-philosophers through the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius. On reading that his politics were of the Left, though not the extreme Left, I was reminded that the first occasion on which I met him he was delivering the Pastoral Theology Lecture in Durham on the theme of a Marxist challenge to Christian faith and practice. A fluent lecturer and a model of lucidity, personally shy if not indeed elusive, he was an enthusiastic teacher of broad sympathy and a churchman with an equal ecumenicity. Sell's account of his first book, *Wilhelm Dilthey: An Introduction*, will provide most readers with their first acquaintance with a little-known philosopher. It may well be that readers who have kept up with the painstaking expositions so far will find their concentration flagging at this point. So it is as well that we are shown that the book highlights what was for Hodges the supremely important distinction between the natural and human sciences. Deeply concerned as he was by the conflict between "the spirit and temper of our scientific age and the Christian outlook on life", Hodges published *Christianity and the Modern World-View* expressing the need for a logic of Christian thinking which became the theme of his Gifford Lectures published posthumously as *God Beyond Knowledge*. Without dismissing the classical

theistic arguments as unimportant he made it very clear that religious belief is an existential decision. One glorious sentence could be said to be a summary of the argument: he says that “the acceptance of God is not an ascertainment of existing fact but a kind of ‘faith’” and goes on to insist that in the decision the believer should not disown the philosopher. Even if Hodges had not been such a distinguished philosopher his two excellent theological-devotional works, *Patterns of Atonement* and *Death and Life Have Contended* would have demonstrated the way his profound piety was informed as much by philosophy as by the great heritage of Methodist hymnody on the one hand and the *Book of Common Prayer* and Orthodoxy on the other. The freshness of analysis in the former made me commend it as one of the great contributions to twentieth-century atonement theology.

Not content with the remarkably thorough exposition of each philosopher, Sell evidently regards his reader as an Oliver Twist and generously gives him more, offering “comparisons, contrasts and assessments”. In so far as this does not re-tread the ground so far traversed it could be said to be an entirely different argument, a review of twentieth-century philosophical theology. Despite the author’s easy style the book is dense reading. The main reason for that is not so much the close argument as the over-abundance of notes where the author is tempted into what are merely passing comments or sometimes a reference to one or other of his many publications and the wide range of tangential facts with which he is familiar. That said, it must also be said that these four humane and not merely intellectual studies, together with the conclusion, will be a useful quarry for historians of twentieth-century thought.

J. HEYWOOD THOMAS

***Providence and Empire, Religion, Politics and Society in the United Kingdom 1815-1914.* By Stewart J. Brown. Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2008. Pp. xiv +494. £23.99. ISBN 978-0-582-29960-3.**

It is some time since a general history of religion, society and politics in nineteenth-century Britain was published, and this welcome volume by the Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Edinburgh has the added advantage of doing full justice to the four nations of the British Isles in that period. It is, however, one of the consequences of this that the internal history of the nonconformist denominations in England receives less attention; and those in Scotland, Ireland and even Wales (with the exception of the Welsh revival of 1904-5) receive even less. Professor Brown places the significant expansion of dissent right at the beginning of the period – during the Napoleonic Wars – and this is certainly right, but unfortunately it is before regular statistical series for any bodies other than the Methodists exist. The really interesting question of whether nonconformity was continuing to grow right up to the Religious

Census of 1851 is not systematically addressed: Professor Brown is sceptical, and there was certainly a tailing off of Methodism in the 1840s.

He does provide a sustained discussion through the volume of evangelicalism in general, although this fails to catch some of the theological subtleties of nineteenth-century nonconformist developments. The Presbyterian Church of England, for example, is not mentioned, notwithstanding the extensive discussion of the Church of Scotland, which is welcome. The advantage of the broader treatment is that it engages such movements as anti-slavery at the beginning of the period and also that it notes the significance of evangelicalism within the established Churches. It also leads naturally on to a thorough treatment of overseas missions as part of the general history – hence “Empire” in the title – which is often not found in such books.

Obviously church-state relations receive detailed treatment and the implications of the Oxford Movement and the Scottish Disruption are well brought out, as are also ritualism and broadening theological horizons. The Roman Catholic Church is not forgotten. At the end of the book there is a good treatment of the Churches’ involvement in politics in educational and social questions. This is an excellent introduction to the period, which comfortably outdates earlier textbooks.

DAVID M. THOMPSON